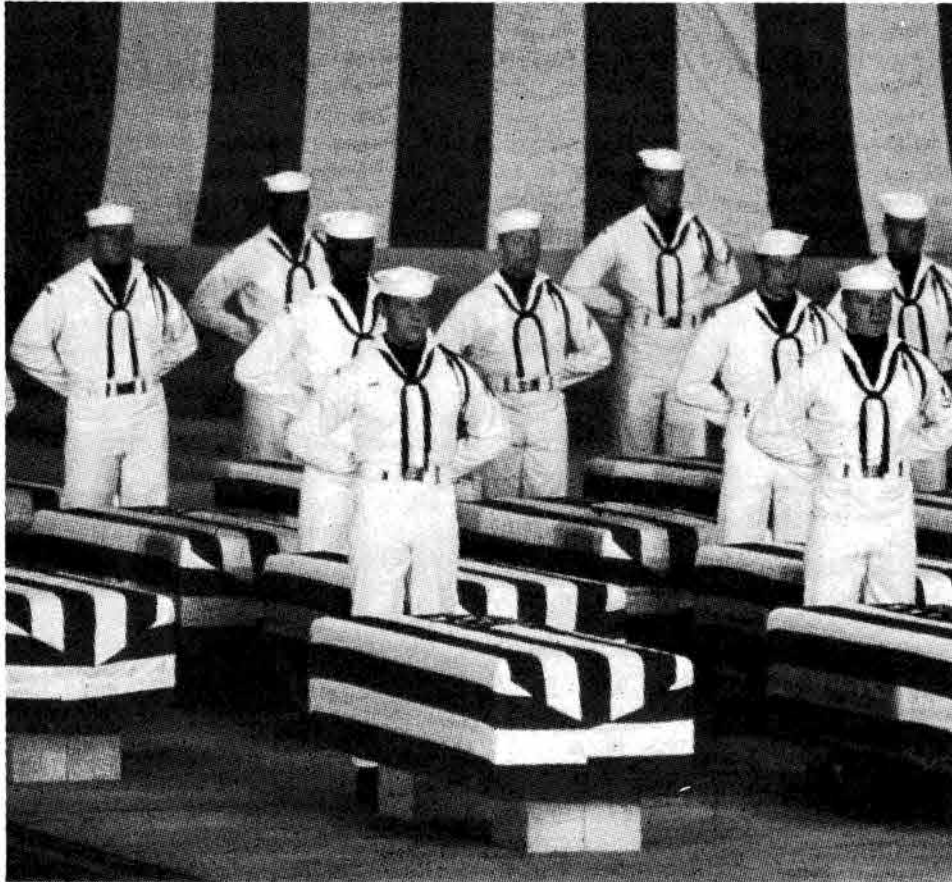


Pentagon reflags Kuwaiti ships to provoke clash with Iran



At right, honor guard and caskets of sailors killed on the *Stark*. In sending warships to Persian Gulf, President Reagan and Congress are putting many more lives at risk in order to set up assault on Iran.

BY FRED FELDMAN

Washington is pressing ahead with stepped-up military intervention in the Persian Gulf. The aim is to provoke a clash with Iran and to throw U.S. naval and air forces behind the weakening regime of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, which has been at war with Iran since 1980.

White House officials announced May 29 that President Ronald Reagan had accepted a proposal by the Joint Chiefs of

See editorial on page 14 and article on Persian Gulf and government crisis on page 5.

Staff for U.S. naval vessels to escort convoys of Kuwaiti tankers through the gulf. The tankers are being reregistered as U.S. ships and placed under the U.S. flag and the command of U.S. captains. The first of the ships was scheduled to have been reflagged by June 3.

At the urging of Adm. William Crowe, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Reagan reportedly committed the administration to retaliate militarily if any U.S. ships are attacked.

Under the plan, three more warships are steaming toward the gulf — raising the number of U.S. naval vessels there to nine.

An aircraft carrier will be stationed near the mouth of the gulf "to provide air cover on occasion and retaliatory bombing capability," the May 30 *Washington Post* reported.

Military provocation

The operation is a direct military provocation against Iran. It sets the stage for provoking — or, failing that, concocting — a clash with Iranian forces in the gulf sea lanes.

Kuwait, a small oil emirate located just south of Iraq, has provided Iraq with its only ports since the war made Iraqi ports inaccessible. Vast quantities of arms and other matériel for the regime's war effort

Continued on Page 4

Linder family on nat'l speaking tour

BY NORTON SANDLER

Members of the family of Ben Linder, the U.S. volunteer murdered by the contras in Nicaragua, are beginning a national speaking tour.

Linder was murdered by Washington-financed mercenaries April 28 while working on a hydroelectric project in the northern mountains of Nicaragua. He was 27 and the first U.S. citizen killed in the contra war against the Nicaraguan government.

Over the summer months, Linder's parents, David and Elisabeth, and his brother and sister, John and Miriam will be available to speak around the country.

At the request of the Linder family, the Nicaragua Network, Quixote Center/Quest for Peace, and National Witness for Peace have agreed to be the initial sponsors of the newly formed Benjamin Linder Peace Tour, which has opened an office in Washington, D.C.

Other groups are being encouraged to add their names as sponsors, and to help set up meetings and raise funds for the tour.

A June 1 letter mailed to some 75 organizations explains, "The Linder family has decided that an appropriate way to honor Ben's life is make themselves available to tell Ben's story through the vehicle of a national speaking tour."

"By describing Ben's work in Nicaragua," the letter continues, "his family will illuminate the development process taking place in the face of the war. By examining Ben's death and the U.S. government's response, they will bring to light the human toll of the war Washington is waging against the people of Nicaragua."

The letter explains, "It is our hope that as the Linders tell Ben's story far and wide, many people will be inspired to help in material aid campaigns, to participate in work and technical brigades to Nicaragua, and to see this Central American nation firsthand by participating in fact-finding tours."

Groups are being encouraged to arrange

speaking engagements for the Linders at national and regional meetings of their organizations as well as before unions; Black, Latino, and women's rights organizations; and peace groups.

Tour coordinator Jerry Freiwirth explains, "The tour has the potential to reach many people who now know little about the U.S. war against Nicaragua and can help mobilize opposition to the U.S. government's plans to continue funding the contras."

David and Elisabeth Linder will be in Seattle June 24-28 to participate in national meetings of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the U.S.-Nicaragua Sister Cities Conference.

Dates and schedules for speaking engagements are being arranged through the tour office. For more information, contact the Benjamin Linder Peace Tour, 2025 I St. NW, Suite 208A, Washington, D.C. 20006. Telephone (202) 331-7675.

600 attend Puerto Rican convention in Conn.

BY FRANCISCO PICADO

HARTFORD, Conn. — Under the theme "Closing ranks: forward to justice and progress," more than 600 people participated in the Fourth National Puerto Rican Convention organized by the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights (NCPRR).

Students, social workers, trade unionists, professionals, community and civil rights activists, as well as fighters for the independence of Puerto Rico, discussed the situation of Puerto Ricans in the United States. The NCPRR has more than 3,000 members throughout the country.

Among the main issues discussed at the May 29-31 conference were the fight against "English only" legislation; the situation in the labor movement, especially with regard to Puerto Ricans and other Latinos; the role of Puerto Ricans in the struggle against U.S. intervention in Central America; and the fight to obtain justice for the 16 independence fighters who were framed up by the FBI on charges of robbing a Wells Fargo depot.

Howard Jordan from the Latino Coalition for Racial Justice spoke at a panel on discrimination and the violation of Puerto Ricans' civil rights. Jordan described a number of incidents of racial violence

against Latinos and Blacks in New York City. He pointed to the importance of the fight to get authorities to prosecute those guilty of carrying out the attacks.

"The 'English only' legislation is an attempt to take rights away from us that we won in previous victories," said Edna Negrón, principal of the Ramón Emeterio Betances Elementary School in Hartford. She pointed out that making English legally the official language of the United States would facilitate further discrimination against workers whose native tongue is not English. Negrón pointed out that "English only" legislation has been adopted in 12 states. So far it has been defeated in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.

The panel also included a presentation by Rafael Anglada López, member of the defense team for the Hartford 16. Anglada López explained that Filiberto Ojeda Ríos and Juan Segarra Palmer have been held in jail, 21 months now, without bail.

"We are fighting for the rights of all those who have been denied the right to bail," he added. In a setback for all working people, the Supreme Court decided last month to uphold the 1984 Bail Reform Act, which allows state authorities to hold prisoners without bail until they are sentenced.

Attending this panel was Héctor Marroquín, a Mexican-born member of the Socialist Workers Party, who is fighting for permanent residence status in the United States. Marroquín was representing the Political Rights Defense Fund at the convention. He told this reporter that the PRDF obtained 21 new sponsors for its case against government spying and harassment. Among the new endorsers were four of the Hartford 16 who attended the conference, as well as two of their defense lawyers.

Convention participants joined others in a picket line May 31 at the Hartford Correctional Center, a couple of miles from the convention site, where Ojeda Ríos and Segarra Palmer are confined.

"Lies, lies, lies; U.S. justice is a lie," chanted some 80 people to the rhythm of Afro-Caribbean congas. "We demand respect for their rights," said Diana Caballero, outgoing president of the NCPRR. "Many of us will be back here in Hartford on August 30," she stated, in reference to the protest being built to demand freedom for the prisoners.

The theme of fighting against U.S. intervention in Central America ran throughout the convention. In a well-attended panel, a

Continued on Page 2

New York panel whitewashes cop violence

BY HARRY RING

NEW YORK — According to a panel appointed by Gov. Mario Cuomo to investigate police brutality in the state, there is no evidence of a systematic use of deadly force by the cops.

The report was praised by New York City Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward and Mayor Edward Koch.

The commission included a former U.S. attorney, a former assistant U.S. attorney, a former police chief, and a former assistant district attorney.

The lone commission member without such a background was an educator, Flora Mancuso Edwards. She is the former head of Hostos Community College, a city college in the Bronx attended primarily by Puerto Rican students. The report, she said, viewed the problem "through the eyes of the people whose interests the system represents."

The commission interviewed "hundreds" of prosecutors, cops, and other officials. It lacked the resources, however, to interview witnesses to beatings, killings, and other police abuse.

In addition, investigators spent several days riding with cops on patrol in two New York precincts. They found the cops behaved responsibly.

The commission said it studied 223 cases of people killed by cops. Of these, 75 percent or more were Black, Latino, or Asian.

A total of seven cops were tried in these killings. All seven were acquitted.

The commission called for a new law

barring civilians from defending themselves against cops, even where excessive force is being used against them. A statewide campaign would publicize the ban on all civilian resistance.

The Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ called upon Governor Cuomo to reject the report.

A statement issued by the racial justice commission's director, Rev. Ben Chavis, warned that if the report is permitted to stand it will send "a message to police officers across the nation that they can continue their racist use of deadly police force against African Americans and others with impunity."

Formation of the state commission had been prompted by five police killings that evoked an outcry, including the killing of

Eleanor Bumpurs.

Officer Stephen Sullivan, the cop who shot the elderly Black woman, was recently acquitted in a Bronx court. And on May 22, four days after the Cuomo commission issued its report, the gunslinging cop was promoted to detective.

That same day, a Manhattan grand jury made the incredible announcement that it had refused to charge the several cops involved in the beating of Alberto Flores two months earlier.

Flores' neighbors had testified that he had not resisted arrest. Moreover, the cops never found the knife they said they thought Flores might have had.

But even more damaging to the cops' case was that the entire incident had been filmed.

Rafael Escano, who lives upstairs from where the beating occurred, made a video film from his window. It shows the helpless Flores thrown over the hood of a car and a cop pounding his back with a nightstick.

The grand jury indicted the victim, Flores, for resisting arrest and for assaulting a cop!

And the very day the police brutality whitewash was issued, a Brooklyn cop gunned down Darren Culler, a Black youth. The cop said he shot when Culler lunged at him with a knife.

In 1968, Culler underwent surgery for severe burns which left him nearly fingerless. He had one thumb on his left hand and three nubs on his right.

A grand jury is investigating the case.

Judge in Goetz case punishes shooting victim

NEW YORK — Bernhard Goetz, on trial for shooting four Black youths in a New York subway in 1984, got a valuable assist when Judge Stephen Crane imposed a contempt sentence on James Ramseur, one of the four victims.

Ramseur was given a six-month sentence and fined for refusing to answer questions that were clearly irrelevant.

Ramseur had been subjected to intensive cross-examination by defense attorney Barry Slotnick.

There were two main thrusts to the questions. One focus was on Ramseur's conviction,

since the shooting, on a rape charge, of which he insists he is innocent.

The second line of questioning concerned Ramseur's activity in the days immediately prior to the shooting.

The youth finally balked when Slotnick demanded to know if he had been with his girlfriend during that time.

"None of your business," Ramseur responded. "What I'm doing with my girlfriend doesn't have anything to do with this case."

The defense attorney's line of questioning wasn't aimed at clarifying issues in the case, but of persuading the jury that the four victims are of such low character that Goetz was justified in shooting them.

The systematic efforts to depict the victims as fearsome near-animals seems to be encountering little resistance from the prosecution, or judge.

The strategy of putting the victims on trial is intended to cope with the defense's key problem: the pretrial admissions by Goetz that the shooting was deliberate and

he was out to murder the four youths.

After the shooting, which occurred when several of the youths approached him for \$5, Goetz fled, surrendering to New Hampshire police eight days later.

In videotaped questioning by police there, Goetz made his widely quoted admission: "The guy who was ... then sitting down, I wasn't sure if I had shot him before. ... I said, 'You seem to be okay. Here's another.'"

That was Darrell Cabey, now permanently paralyzed.

In a follow-up session with New York police, Goetz said, "They didn't die. Well ... that's what God has wanted evidently. ... But I, in my heart, was a murderer."

And when a New Hampshire cop asked, "Your intention was to shoot these people?" Goetz responded, "My intention was worse than shooting."

"Was it your intention to kill these people?"

"My intention was to murder them. ..."

— H.R.

Come to a Rally for Political Rights New York City Saturday, June 20, 7:30 p.m.

Hear:

Héctor Marroquín, Political Rights Defense Fund, Mexican-born socialist fighting to become a permanent resident of the United States.

Daniel Perez, a leader of recent victorious strike at Uretek in New Haven; director, Connecticut district, ILGWU.

Gil Green

Rabab Hadi, Committee for Justice to Stop McCarran Act Political Deportations, and Network for Peace and Justice in the Middle East.

Fred Dube, member of African National Congress, professor at State University of New York at Stony Brook fighting for tenure.

and others

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600 attend Puerto Rican convention

Continued from front page

very lively discussion took place on the role of Puerto Ricans in this fight.

Digna Sánchez, member of the board of directors of MADRE, explained, "The struggle against U.S. intervention in Central America is very much our struggle; it's our Latin America and our Caribbean."

Patricia DeCarlo from the Farm Workers Support Committee (CATA) tied the U.S. war to the new immigration bill and announced a Puerto Rican antiwar conference to take place at the end of August in Chicago.

The convention was dedicated to the 60 Puerto Rican and Latino garment workers of Uretek in New Haven, Connecticut, who recently won the right to union representation by the International Ladies' Gar-

ment Workers' Union (ILGWU) after a three-month strike.

Some 100 people attended the panel on Puerto Ricans in the labor movement. The panel was chaired by Zoilo Torrez, associate editor of the *Distributive Worker* from United Auto Workers District 65, and newly elected president of the NCPRR. Among the activists present at the panel were members of the ILGWU, Teamsters, International Union of Electronic Workers, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, Service Employees' International Union, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199, and United Electrical Workers, among others. The panel discussed the need for a conference to discuss the way forward in the labor movement.

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The *Militant* is written in the interests of workers and farmers. Every week it tells the truth about the war Washington and the employers are waging against working people at home and abroad. We provide first-hand coverage of events in other countries, such as Cuba, Burkina Faso, and the Philippines. In addition, regular on-the-scene reports come from our Nicaragua Bureau.

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The Militant

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Young socialists meet in Chicago

Delegates discuss fight against employers' attacks and U.S.-backed contra war

BY MALIK MIAH

CHICAGO — "The best way to build our organization is to have our heads up and to look as far as we can," said Andy, a delegate from Albany, New York, to the 25th national convention of the Young Socialist Alliance held here May 23-25 at the Hyatt-Regency Hotel.

"Young people," he said, "need a tool to lead fights. That's what the YSA is."

Andy was one of 112 delegates attending the YSA's convention. Like many others, he's a political activist fighting to end Washington's mercenary war in Nicaragua, U.S. support to apartheid, and the employers' drive against workers and farmers in the United States.

The YSA is a revolutionary youth organization made up of workers, high school and college students, and other youth fighting for a socialist world.

Some 569 people registered for the convention. These included industrial workers, high school and college students, and several international guests.

Government crisis

Francisco Picado, a member of the YSA's National Executive Committee, opened the convention, the organization's highest decision-making body, by discussing the current political situation in the country.

"Our 25th convention," he said, "takes place in the midst of a deep political crisis of the U.S. government. A crisis that continues to expose the undemocratic and corrupt character of a government that functions behind the backs of the people it claims to represent."

Picado said the crisis is deepening with the testimony and revelations in the congressional hearings on the Iran-contra arms scandal. The political reaction among working people and youth to the recent murder of U.S. engineer Ben Linder by Nicaraguan contras, and the continuing political advances being made in Nicaragua, also deepen the predicament of the U.S. rulers.

"The death of 37 sailors in the Persian Gulf," he added, "is a further illustration of the crisis facing the government."

Pointing to the fight of meat-packers, coal miners, the farm workers of the Yakima Valley in Washington state, and cannery workers of Watsonville, California, Picado said, more working people are beginning to resist the government and employer attacks. "This opens possibilities for the YSA to talk to and win these resistance fighters to the ranks of our organization,"



Militant/Holbrook Mahn

Internationalism, optimism, and YSA's place in forging a world communist leadership were constant themes of three-day meeting.

he said. "As people struggle," he continued, "they become better fighters."

YSA's political roots

The delegates' contributions under the three political reports presented to and adopted by the convention showed a serious approach to probing the YSA's political roots and what its tasks are today.

Aaron from the Boston chapter pointed to the "facts as key to understanding the historical advance" of working people since 1848, when the modern communist movement was founded. He cited the experience of the overturn of capitalist rule in Russia in 1917 and in Cuba in 1959, and the current revolutionary advances in Nicaragua and other countries.

Aaron spoke under the report, "Communism Today and Forging an International Revolutionary Working-Class Leadership," presented by YSA National Secretary Rena Cacoullos.

Cacoullos pointed to the Cuban revolution as especially important for communist youth. The YSA was founded soon after the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959, she said. Cacoullos recently was in Cuba for the 5th Congress of the Union of Young Communists (UJC).

"Cuba is today a giant on the doorstep of imperialism," she said. "It champions the

oppressed and exploited in the Americas, southern Africa, and around the world." Cuba sends thousands of internationalist volunteers to scores of countries, she added.

Ben from the Mid-Hudson, New York, chapter, said, "Which way forward for workers and farmers is the question you asked when deciding to join the YSA."

"Who do we look to?" he asked. "Maurice Bishop, Fidel Castro, the Sandinistas. We have confidence in the working class. Others don't."

Denise from Boston agreed. "The fight of the JS-19 [Sandinista youth organization], the ANC [African National Congress], and UJC are our struggles. It gives us more confidence."

Internationalism, optimism, and the YSA's place in forging a world communist leadership was a constant theme during the three days of the conference.

Tina from Boston summed it up. "We see workers and peasants as the makers of change; not the objects of change," she said.

John Linder, the brother of Ben Linder, gave greetings to the convention. John, a former leader of the YSA and a current member of the Socialist Workers Party, described his brother's life in Nicaragua and said, "For every Ben Linder the U.S. government kills, there will be 2, 3, 10, 50 Ben Linders to take his place."

A proposal to get more volunteers to Nicaragua — especially workers, including trade unionists — was also taken up in the report, "The Labor Movement and U.S. Politics," given by YSA leader Greg McCartan.

McCartan said, "YSA members in industry can take the lead in talking to other workers during the upcoming national tour by members of the Linder family. We will be able to explain to workers why they

should follow Ben Linder's example and join in as internationalist volunteers on brigades to Nicaragua. Tour meetings with unionists and farmers can be organized, in addition to all other types of meetings — on campus, before church groups and solidarity committees, and broadly sponsored public rallies."

Go to students

He said that the struggles of U.S. workers and farmers must be placed in the context of the upsurge of workers and farmers around the world. Pointing to the example of Nicaragua, McCartan said, "It is only the working class in alliance with exploited farmers that can make and lead progressive struggles and bring about revolutionary change against the rule of financial and industrial capital. The Sandinistas concretized this historic perspective in the slogan, 'Only the workers and farmers will go all the way.'"

A number of speakers said this working-class orientation must be taken to students. Denise, a student from Boston, said, "Students are interested in the labor movement. Students want to read the *Militant* because of its coverage of the labor movement."

Patti from the Morgantown, West Virginia, chapter, said, "We have to get ourselves out to the plant gates and mine portals. We need to think out how we can reach out to workers and youth."

Beth from San Jose, California, explained how the Watsonville strike inspired and provoked discussions among young people in her area. "Their fight helped us in discussions among other workers such as machinists at the Lockheed plant," she said.

Zoe, a high school student in Philadelphia, pointed out that only two groups of people can be legally strip-searched: high school students and prisoners. She said YSAers recently won the right to sell at her high school.

This mood of militancy is also seen on the college campuses. Julie from the University of Washington in Seattle pointed to campus fights against the CIA, apartheid, and other issues. Recently the students renamed the engineering school library after Ben Linder, who graduated from the university.

Tasks and perspectives

Discussions on the role of the trade unions in politics, plant-gate sales, and winning students and workers to the revolutionary movement continued under the "YSA Summer Tasks and Perspectives" report by National Executive Committee member James Winfield.

Winfield outlined six major tasks for young socialists:

- Build the Linder family tour.
- Aid in the sponsor drive and fundraising efforts of the Political Rights Defense Fund. The PRDF is winning support and sponsors and raising money for two important battles concerning democratic rights: the government's challenge to the

Continued on Page 13

Farm activists participate in workshop at convention

CHICAGO — Some 100 young people packed a YSA convention workshop on the struggle of working farmers in the United States.

Merle Hansen, a Nebraska farmer and president of the North American Farm Alliance, told the activists at the workshop, "If you are serious about what you're doing, you have to understand that the question of who owns the land is a central question all over the world — Central America, South Africa, Asia."

Hansen explained that today's farm crisis is not the first. "The basic contradiction that puts farmers as victims is the marketing system controlled by big corporations, and family farmers cannot control what they buy or sell," Hansen said.

Hansen recounted the historical role of socialists in the farm protest movement. He said socialists should be in the forefront of the fight of working farmers.

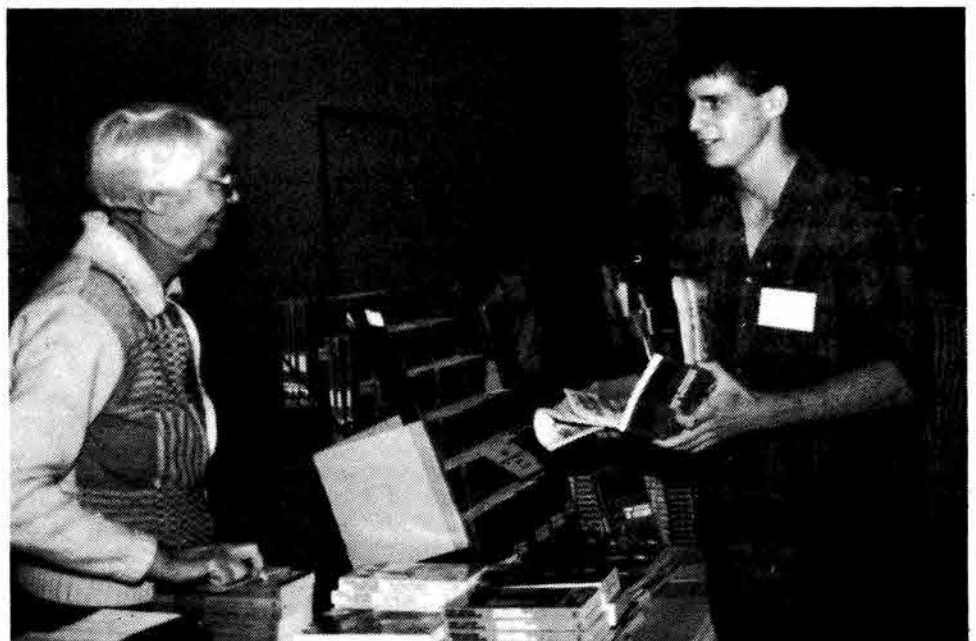
Following Hansen, George Paris, an Alabama farmer and leader of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives and the Land Assistance Fund, spoke. Paris explained that the present crisis is particularly devastating to Black farmers. "Government figures show," he said, "that if present trends continue there will be no Black farmers by the end of the century."

Paris explained how the federation, which grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, had become a target of government harassment because of its success in organizing Black farmers. The federation fought off a years-long FBI "probe" that was designed to discredit the organization and erode its financial support.

Also speaking was Kathleen Fitzgerald, a Socialist Workers Party member and meat-packer who is an activist in the farm protest movement.

Fitzgerald said that an alliance between exploited farmers and workers would have the power to change history. Central to forging that alliance, she said, will be the labor and farm protest movements together championing the demands of farm wage workers, who are one of the worst-off sections of the U.S. working class.

A lively discussion going way over the allotted time followed the panelists. Among the many questions discussed were: Are farmers producing too much food? With world hunger as it is, is cutting back production really the way to raise the prices of farm commodities? Are the powers that be really trying to get rid of the working farmer? And how does the land reform in Nicaragua relate to the United States? —M.M.



Militant/Holbrook Mahn

Pathfinder table sold \$2,000 worth of revolutionary literature. YSA convention participants were encouraged to read and distribute Pathfinder books and pamphlets.

What happened to the Iraqi pilot?

BY FRED FELDMAN

Whatever happened to the pilot of the Iraqi plane that fired a missile or missiles at the USS *Stark*, killing 37 sailors? He seems to have mysteriously disappeared.

When a high-level team of U.S. officials went to Baghdad, the capital city of Iraq, to investigate the incident, Iraq's ambassador to the United States promised they could meet with "everybody that could facilitate the investigation."

But "everybody," it turned out, did not include the pilot. The regime of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein refused to let the U.S. officials talk to him.

And when Rear Admiral David Rogers announced the conclusion of the investigation May 29, there was no indication that the team had been allowed to speak to the pilot's commanding officers, either.

The Iraqi ambassador had changed his tune. "Individual officers cannot be interviewed by foreigners," he insisted.

Speculation

The fate of the pilot has been the subject of much speculation. Lt. Gen. Harley Hughes, a top air force official, suggested that the pilot had been beheaded. Television news reporters passed along the rumor that he was not Iraqi at all, but from one of the countries whose government supports Iraq in its war with Iran.

If the Iraqi pilot could testify freely, a great many unanswered questions could possibly be cleared up. But being barred from talking to the pilot or other key witnesses didn't seem to bother Rogers and his cohorts. He praised the Hussein regime's

"cooperation and forthrightness." He told reporters that "it would not be proper" for him to answer any questions about the investigation.

Instead, Rogers indicated that "preliminary agreement" had been reached on preventing future incidents.

The *New York Times* suggested that the agreement might involve "coordinating movements in the Persian Gulf." That means deeper involvement in the Iraqi regime's air war against shipping bound for Iran and the likelihood that incidents similar to the attack on the *Stark* will be twisted into pretexts for military operations against Iran.

Rogers did not comment on reports that U.S. and Iraqi officials had not been able to agree on even so simple a fact as the location of the *Stark* when it was hit.

Stench of cover-up

The stench of cover-up pervaded the so-called investigation in Baghdad.

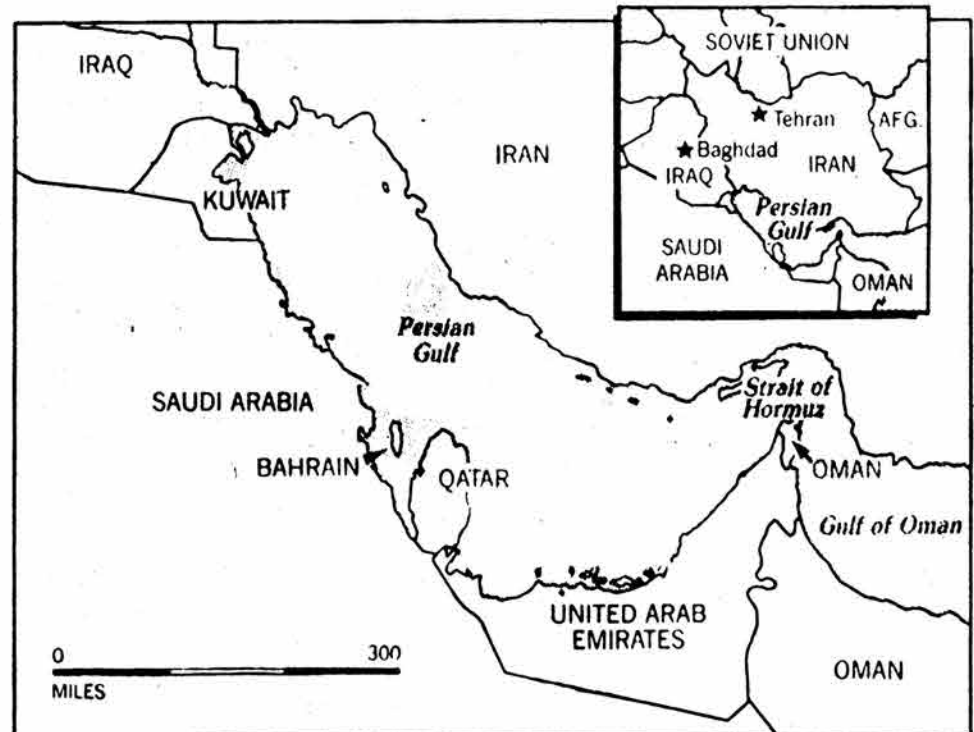
Washington has portrayed the attack on the *Stark* as the work of a single "trigger-happy pilot," as presidential chief of staff Howard Baker put it. But there are many unanswered questions.

• Was the *Stark* selected as a target?

Immediately after the attack on the *Stark* was made public, Pentagon official Robert Sims labeled it "inadvertent."

Citing a growing body of evidence, the May 30 *Washington Post* reported that the Iraqi plane "appeared to have specifically been seeking out the *Stark*."

An earlier article in the same newspaper noted that Iraqi air control headquarters



normally selects the targets for such missions.

• Did the pilot know the target was a U.S. warship?

The *Stark* sent two radio messages identifying itself to the oncoming jet. And Rear Admiral Harold Bersen, commander of the U.S. fleet in the Persian Gulf, conceded May 19, according to the *Washington Post*, "that the still unidentified Iraqi pilot who staged the attack had sophisticated equipment aboard his French-made jet that would have told him what kind of warship he was facing by the electronic

emissions of his radars and communications equipment."

• Was the Iraqi pilot "an incompetent greenhorn"?

That was the picture Pentagon officials such as Harley Hughes painted for reporters to explain the incident. But now Pentagon officials concede the pilot was "an accomplished aviator with 1,300 hours of flying time and 15 successful missile attacks on tankers in the Persian Gulf," reported the May 30 *New York Times*.

• Was the attack on the *Stark* observed by U.S. surveillance aircraft?

The *New York Times* reported May 21 that a U.S. AWACS reconnaissance plane based in Saudi Arabia had tracked the Iraqi plane, but that the *Stark* was not informed that a missile had been fired at it.

The next day's *Times*, however, reported that despite previous reports, officials were now denying that an AWACS plane had observed the launching of the missiles. No other personnel observed the launch, the officials said.

At this point, it looks as though the U.S. investigators in Baghdad were out to bury the truth about the mysterious events of May 17. And it's unlikely that we'll ever hear from the pilot of the Iraqi jet.

Pentagon aims to provoke clash with Iran

Continued from front page
pass through Kuwait.

Nizar Hamdoun, Iraq's ambassador to the United States, stated May 31 that he was "not sure" whether the U.S.-guarded convoys would be carrying arms for the Iraqi military.

But word has leaked out that U.S. naval vessels in the gulf are already escorting arms shipments for Iraq. Washington recently escorted a Kuwaiti merchant ship to Bahrain, another Persian Gulf emirate, where U.S.-made tanks were unloaded. NBC news revealed that the ship then moved on to Kuwait where howitzers — possibly U.S.-made — for the Iraqi regime were unloaded.

The U.S. forces in the gulf are seeking incidents involving Iran. An Iranian airliner was ordered to change course by U.S. naval vessels on May 26. The pilot radioed that "the Americans are threatening us," an Iranian airline official reported.

'Freedom of navigation'

In a May 29 statement, President Reagan said the U.S. goal was to protect "freedom of navigation." He declared his determination to take military action to prevent "Iran and the Soviet Union" from blocking oil shipments from the region.

However, far from attempting to guarantee freedom of navigation, Washington is stepping up support to an Iraqi regime that has waged a six-year war against shipping bound to and from Iran.

Since 1981, when the Iraqi rulers' invasion of Iran began to be pushed back, Iraqi aircraft have attacked ships headed for Iranian ports. In 1984 Iranian forces began retaliating by targeting shipping headed for Persian Gulf countries like Kuwait that support and supply the Iraqi war effort.

The May 22 *New York Times* reported that there have been 219 Iraqi attacks on ships since the war began, compared to 95 by Iran.

"Iran is the only Gulf exporter that depends on the sea route which has been hit really hard by the tanker war," reported the *Economist*, a British newsweekly.

"The general flow of oil shows no sign of being squeezed; the Arab states of the Gulf are easily filling their OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] quotas," the same publication noted. It added that Washington "is not lifting a

finger to defend the right of nonbelligerents' tankers to call at Iran's oil terminals."

An Iranian diplomat told the *Christian Science Monitor*, "Our interest is to keep the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz open to everyone, because, after all, we need the gulf to export our own oil."

An editorial in the March 29 *Washington Post*, which supports Washington's moves against Iran, commented, "American officials... should stop the misleading talk of 'maintaining the free flow of oil,' since the United States has no interest in stopping Iraq from blocking Iran's oil."

Reagan's assertion that the Soviet Union is a threat to oil shipments through the gulf is also false. The Soviet Union now has two frigates in the gulf, and several Soviet minesweepers are also reported heading there. Soviet officials have allowed the Kuwaiti regime to charter three Soviet tankers and has offered to protect them.

Unlike Washington, however, the Soviet government has not threatened war or military "retaliation" against any country in the region.

Iraqi ruler in trouble

The reason for Washington's build-up in the gulf is not a threat to oil shipments, but the prospect that an Iranian victory in the war with Iraq will bring down Hussein's increasingly unpopular regime.

"We can't stand to see Iraq defeated," Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage told a congressional committee May 29. "That specter would lead to instability from Marrakech [Morocco] to Bangladesh."

The U.S. government, declared Democratic Sen. John Glenn May 27, must be prepared to "go to war" with Iran. "We are taking sides now in that war. We are dropping this fig leaf of neutrality."

(Since the war began in 1980, Washington has portrayed itself as neutral while covertly backing the Iraqi regime.)

Iranian forces now hold salients in three parts of Iraq. The Iraqi regime has also been forced to suspend its bombings of Iranian cities, which have taken many lives, after 10 percent of its air force planes were lost over Iran between November and February.

Popular unrest is growing in Iraq itself. "The war's most serious fighting," the May 29 *Washington Post* reported, "has shifted

to the northern regions inhabited by Kurds, Turks, and other ethnic minorities.... With support from Iran, the two main Kurdish nationalist groups mounted guerrilla campaigns in that area in April, cutting off Iraqi garrisons and some towns....

"The Iraqi military has doubled the size of its forces there to about 40,000 men and has turned the areas outside of its camps and large towns into free-fire zones. Two visitors to the area each recently counted eight villages that had been razed by the Army along the road that connects Irbil and Kirkuk. Conservative estimates of the number of villages burned by the Army within the past month range from 80 to 300.

"The villages are apparently being destroyed to deny civilian support to the Kurdish guerrilla forces.... Thousands of Kurds and Turks are being uprooted for resettlement elsewhere in Iraq."

The Iraqi forces have used defoliants and other chemical weapons on a large scale against the Kurds.

The revolt is bringing the government of Turkey, another close ally of Washington, more deeply into the war on the side of Saddam Hussein. Turkish war planes have bombed Kurdish areas in Iraq, and Turkish officials have warned Iran against stepping up support to the Iraqi Kurds.

'We are not marines'

Washington's imperialist allies continue to indicate reluctance to become involved in military operations against Iran.

"We are not marines," said Italian Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani, when asked if his government would heed U.S. calls for military support in the gulf.

On June 1 the members of the United Nations Security Council failed to agree on support for a U.S.-backed move to impose a global arms embargo on Iran. The resolution would bar arms shipments to any government that rejected Security Council proposals for ending the war — a reference to Iran. The governments of France, Britain, the United States, and other council members have been openly or covertly backing the Iraqi regime.

U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz insisted June 2 that lack of support from U.S. allies would not deter Washington's war preparations.

Youth commemorate Malcolm X's birthday

BY CHRISTINE GAUVREAU

NEWARK, N.J. — Hundreds of students, parents, and teachers filled the auditorium at Malcolm X Shabazz High School to hear a program commemorating the revolutionary figure for whom the school is named. The event marked Malcolm X's Birthday, May 19, 1925.

The program held May 17 was third in a series of annual commemorations and focused on the theme: "Malcolm X: a Positive Image for Youth." Gil Noble, a prominent Black television journalist, was featured.

The highlight was a ceremony honoring Shabazz High School students who were finalists in a Malcolm X Academic Competition.

Nearly 350 students entered the contest, which was sponsored by the People's Organization for Progress (POP) and the Racial Justice Commission of the United Church of Christ, in conjunction with Shabazz High School and the Newark Board of Education.

POP chairperson Lawrence Hamm said he hoped the contest helped "instill in our young people the same insatiable desire for knowledge that Malcolm X possessed."

Each of the top 11 finalists received a trophy and a copy of *By Any Means Necessary*, a collection of the speeches and interviews of Malcolm X. The top 12 runners-up received copies of *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*. The remaining runners-up received copies of *Two Speeches by Malcolm X*. The books and pamphlets were donated by Pathfinder, which publishes and distributes them.

Persian Gulf events: what they show about U.S. gov't crisis

BY MARGARET JAYKO

What do the events in the Persian Gulf reveal about the underlying causes of the continuing U.S. government crisis that broke out last November?

That crisis began with the exposure of secret arms deals between the U.S. and Iranian governments, with some of the proceeds going to finance the CIA-run contras in Nicaragua. The current clash in the gulf puts a spotlight on the Iran side of the Iran-contragate affair.

Policy fiascos trigger crisis

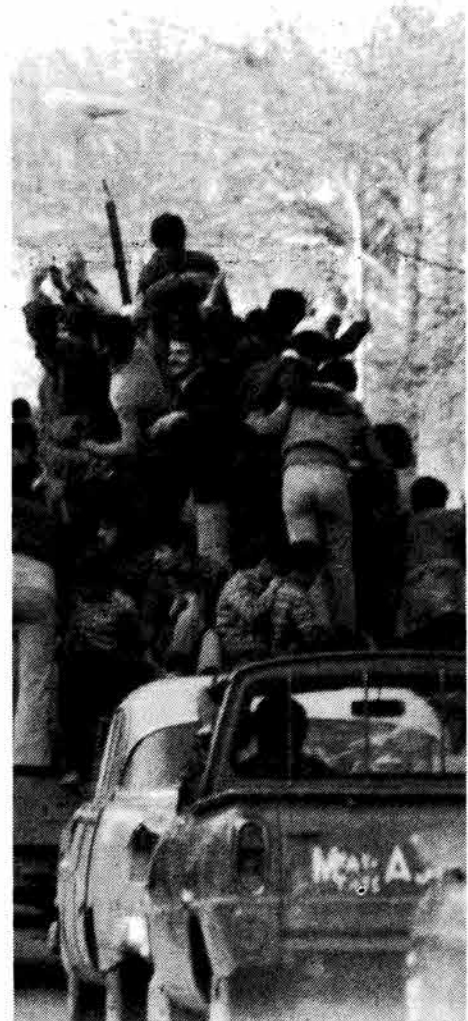
It's useful to look back at the series of articles I wrote in the *Militant* in January on the issues underlying the government crisis and see how they stand up in light of the latest threats by Washington against Iran.

Some of the main ideas presented were:

- The Iran-contra debacle is "a deepgoing government crisis, not simply a crisis of the Reagan administration." No wing of either the Democratic or Republican parties, including the chaos-plagued liberals, has any coherent alternative course to the one pursued by the Reagan administration.

- The failure of the CIA-organized contra war against Nicaragua triggered the crisis, but it "didn't begin in Nicaragua and is not limited to the U.S. government policy fiasco in that region."

Underlying Washington's dilemma is



Militant/Cindy Jaquith
Street demonstration in Tehran during 1979 Iran revolution. Shah's overthrow was big blow to U.S. imperialist interests in Mideast.

the inability of U.S. imperialism to afford a "New Deal"-type social and economic program at home or even make the pretense of carrying out an Alliance for Progress-type program internationally to help head off rebellions and revolutions.

- Using Washington's mammoth arsenal to keep the world's peoples in line is not so easy, however. "There's an enormous and growing contradiction between the potential military strength of Washington, with its massive arsenal, and its actual weakness in being able to use its bombs and troops to impose its will in the world."

In the wake of the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam in 1975, opposition to the use of U.S. troops abroad became majority sentiment in the United States.

Reagan's assumption of the presidency in 1980 was accompanied by a promise to

reverse the "Vietnam syndrome" and use U.S. troops and firepower in any situation where U.S. "national interests" were at stake. This promise proved impossible to keep.

The Reagan administration was never able to put the "Reagan doctrine" into practice, and opposition to U.S. military adventures runs deeper than ever. The political price Washington has to pay when it does use its arsenal is high.

Iranian revolution

The new stage of U.S. involvement in the Iran-Iraq war confirms these conclusions.

The attack on the USS *Stark* and the Democrats' and Republicans' response highlights the serious threat of war that is a result of basic bipartisan agreement on the need to act militarily to defend the profits and prerogatives of U.S. big business wherever they are threatened. At the same time, it underlines the limits on U.S. imperialism's ability to use its military might around the world.

At the heart of the problem facing Washington in the Persian Gulf is the February 1979 revolution that took place in Iran, a social upheaval of historic importance that has affected world, as well as regional, politics.

Before the revolution, Iran was ruled by a monarchy headed by the shah, a brutal and bloody dictator who was installed through a CIA-organized coup in 1953. The shah's regime was primarily based on Iran's powerful landholding class, which subjugated 18 million peasants.

At the time of the shah's downfall, there were more than 45,000 U.S. military and economic advisers stationed in Iran. The CIA had three top-secret spy posts on the 1,600-mile long Iran-USSR border. And the shah provided military and economic aid to many reactionary regimes in the region.

A massive upsurge of the Iranian people overthrew monarchy-landlord rule in 1979. Millions of peasants began dividing up the land of the big landlords and foreign corporations. U.S. advisers were expelled, and many of the large imperialist-owned businesses were nationalized.

With a population of more than 45 million and a high level of economic and industrial development compared with most of its neighbors — many of which are sparsely settled sultanates with little economic development or national cohesion — Iran has a big impact in the entire region.

The whole Middle East became more politicized as a result of the struggles of the Iranian peasants and workers. The existence of the Iranian revolution makes the U.S.-backed governments throughout the Middle East less confident and less stable.

The oppressed Kurdish population of Iraq, for example, which has been the target of military attacks by the Iraqi government, has aided Iran in the Iran-Iraq war. And there are antigovernment forces in many countries in the area who identify with the Iranian regime.

The expulsion of the massive U.S. military machine from Iran caused a major shift in the relationship of forces in the region between Washington and Moscow to the detriment of U.S. imperialism.

The fact that tiny Kuwait went ahead earlier this year and asked for Soviet protection for its oil tankers speaks volumes about the degree to which Washington now has to deal with the Kremlin in this region. Such a move would have been unthinkable prior to 1979.

As *Washington Post* columnist Mary McGrory put it in her June 2 column, Reagan "must accept the Soviet presence in the gulf. . . . The Soviet presence in the gulf is an accomplished fact now."

The overthrow of the shah meant that, with the exception of the imperialist state of Israel, there is no country in the Middle East or northern Africa that has both the political stability and economic and social development necessary to be a strong mili-



Iranian soldiers on way to battlefield with Iraq. U.S. threats against Iran are designed to pressure Iran to end war before Iraqi regime crumbles.

tary ally of the kind the Pentagon needs in the gulf.

Increased importance of U.S. Navy

One reflection of this political weakening of U.S. imperialism is the massive build-up of the naval strength of the U.S. armed forces. There's a debate among Pentagon strategists over the wisdom of the Reagan administration's goal of a 600-ship navy (more than 550 vessels are currently afloat).

Washington's emphasis on sea power, however, highlights its lack of land power — the unwillingness of countries in the region to provide bases for U.S. troops and planes, and the inability of Washington to win enough public support to actually deploy land forces.

Offshore bombardments and air attacks, as deadly as they are, are no substitute for ground troops that can invade and occupy a country. And land bases near the scene of conflict are important — especially when the battlefield is 7,000 miles away from the United States.

The Pentagon has been putting pressure on its allies in the region to allow U.S. bases on their soil. But none, except Oman, has been willing to take such an unpopular step. And even there the Sultan has only allowed a low-profile, limited field for antisubmarine airplanes.

Iran-Iraq war

The blowing up of the *Stark* by an Iraqi plane was a temporary setback to Washington's attempts to set up a provocation against Iran that could be a pretext for launching a military attack against that country.

In 1980 Washington supported Iraq's invasion of Iran as a way to weaken the Iranian government and, if possible, overthrow it.

The war didn't pan out for Iraq the way Washington had hoped it would. By 1982, much to U.S. government officials' surprise, the Iranian regime was able to push back the Iraqi invaders.

President Saddam Hussein's troops have proved incapable of defeating Iran, despite the massive amount of military hardware he has received from governments friendly to Washington.

Realizing that prolonging the war was weakening the Iraqi regime more than Iran's, Washington wants to try to bring an end to the war on terms that will save the Iraqi government. As long as the war continues, negotiations between the U.S. and Iranian governments appear to be out. This was demonstrated by the fiasco with the talks last year aimed at winning the release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon and opening up channels of communication with the government of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Those secret talks between U.S. and Iranian officials were exposed, with opposition to them surfacing in both countries.

The collapse of the talks has been followed with more bellicose moves against Iran by Washington.

Saving Iraqi regime

The problem facing Washington now is how to prevent the Iraqi government from falling and thereby spreading the instability in the region. That means ending the war on the best possible terms for Iraq — which

means softening up Iran with some attacks launched from U.S. ships and aircraft.

The only other option — to militarily defeat Iran — would require massive, direct U.S. military intervention on the side of Iraq, including the use of U.S. troops. But there are enormous political obstacles, both domestically and internationally, that prevent Washington from embarking on such an adventure.

The people of the United States are already questioning why U.S. seamen are getting killed in the Persian Gulf.

Bipartisan belligerence

But Washington's moves will not be governed by the needs or wishes of the people of this country. The rulers don't need majority agreement to carry out military strikes if they feel they have to — they simply need a reasonable amount of unity in their own political circles.

And in the Persian Gulf crisis, there is a striking degree of bipartisan unity on objectives and approach.

Democrats and Republicans have spoken almost with one voice on the need to beef up Washington's military presence in the gulf in response to the bombing of the *Stark*, setting the stage for provoking Iran to attack a ship with a U.S. flag flying over it, or manufacturing a frame-up that can make Iran appear to be the aggressor.

The main congressional criticisms of the White House's actions have been over how to convince the people of the United States that they do have a stake in attacking Iran, the need to keep Congress a little better informed of what's going on, and the need to back up Reagan's frequent tough talk with preparations for serious military action.

The congressional Democrats, in fact, have played the role of chiding Reagan for not being tough enough.

Rep. Tom Lantos (D.-Calif.), a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, wrote in a column in the May 31 *New York Times*, "No one is advocating our withdrawal from the Gulf. Most of my colleagues in Congress and I strongly favor a continued American presence there. . . . United States forces should remain in the Gulf — perhaps with increased strength, possibly with additional air cover and certainly as part of a coordinated multinational presence."

On June 2 the House passed a bill permitting the reflagging of Kuwaiti oil tankers with the Stars and Stripes as long as the president keeps Congress in the know about military operations he carries out.

Not one voice has been raised in Congress challenging the right of the U.S. government to send its imperial armed forces thousands of miles across the globe to violate the right to self-determination of the people of Iran — and endanger the lives of U.S. sailors in the bargain.

It is this lack of any alternative policy from the liberals, and the degree of bipartisan agreement on targeting Iran, that constitutes the real danger that Washington will carry out at least some of its threats.

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'Militant' sales team meets western coal miners

BY SUSAN LaMONT

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — During May our sales team logged some 3,300 miles during a two-week trip through Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado to talk with coal miners, introduce them to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva*

Militant's recent coverage of developments in the UMWA, including a subscription form. We found both aids useful.

Three of the mines and mining communities we visited are on or near the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico. Most of the

families who bought subscriptions were interested in learning more about Nicaragua, especially the autonomy plan being implemented on that country's Atlantic Coast.

Our next stop was the Trinidad, Colorado and Raton, New Mexico area, an old mining center on the front range of the Rockies. Many of the miners here are Chicano. We sold at the Kaiser Coal Co.'s York Canyon mine, located at the end of a 45-mile drive down a beautiful, but lonesome, canyon road through a national park. Workers in three of the four cars that went by stopped to get copies of the paper.

We also visited a UMWA picket line at the Wyoming Fuel mine, 30 miles outside Trinidad, where UMWA Local 9856 has been on strike for more than a year. Five subscriptions and 23 single copies were sold in the Trinidad-Raton area.

The final leg of our trip was to the western slope of the Rockies in Colorado, which is dotted with small mining communities. We sold at the shift change at the Empire Energy mine, near Craig. For a while, it seemed like we were the last four people on earth, standing alone with our *Militants* in the middle of a vast expanse of empty land... until miners began pulling into and out of the mine roads, stopping to talk with us and buying 20 copies of the paper.

In Hayden, we spoke with the president of Local 1385, Kerry



Militant/Nancy Burton
Western coalfields team member talking to miners in Kayenta, Arizona.

SELLING OUR PRESS AT THE PLANT GATE

Mundial, and learn more about the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) strikes at 10 western surface (strip) mines that began in late February.

UMWA members in Districts 15 and 22, which cover the western United States, have been confronted in recent years with both a vast expansion of new, unorganized mining and the closing of many older mines that had been organized by the union. Thousands of UMWA miners have lost their jobs. Nevertheless, the UMWA remains the strongest union in much of this area, where coal mining has long been a major industry and where miners' leading role in the class struggle goes back for decades.

Since we were going to areas where most workers are not familiar with the socialist press, we made a big poster-board sign for use at mine shift-change sales and a leaflet reprinting some of the

miners are Navajo, thanks to struggles by the Navajo people (supported by the UMWA) to win affirmative action in hiring.

On the picket line at the entrance to Peabody's Kayenta and Black Mesa mines, strikers explained that the issues involved in the strike center on making some progress on job security and beating back the company's take-back demands. Several pickets got single copies, and one bought a subscription.

At the third mine, Pittsburg & Midway's McKinley mine outside of Gallup, New Mexico, the workers had just returned to work after a bitter 75-day strike over similar issues. The mood of the miners was up, and close to 80 bought the *Militant* at the afternoon shift change.

In the mining communities near these three mines we sold 12 *Militant* and *PM* subscriptions and 50 single copies. Many of the Navajo

Cobb, and members of the newly formed women's auxiliary. The local had just concluded its strike at Peabody's Seneca mine outside Hayden. Before being stopped by the local cops, we sold five subscriptions and five single copies in this tiny town, where many lawns sport "We support UMWA" signs.

Throughout the trip, we found interest in checking out a socialist paper. Many miners involved in the surface strikes were disgusted with their local press, which by and large printed the companies'

side of the story.

Many of the miners we spoke with understood that the outcome of their strikes would affect not only themselves and UMWA locals back East, but the position of working people throughout the country. We also found miners discussing how to make their union stronger, the problem of so many western mines being unorganized, the effect of high unemployment on keeping a strike solid, and whether the union's selective strike strategy is working.

Final all-out effort needed to make 'Militant' goal

BY MALIK MIAH

NEWARK — In spite of record-breaking hot temperatures, supporters of the *Militant* and the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* fanned out across northern New Jersey to sell introductory subscriptions to the socialist publications May 30-31.

The nearly two dozen supporters sold 62 subscriptions — 29 on Saturday and 20 on Sunday, as well as 13 sold by Héctor Marroquín at a congress on Puerto Rican rights held in Hartford, Connecticut. Marroquín, who lives in Newark, is a Mexican-born socialist fighting for permanent residency in the United States.

Newark supporters, like many supporters around the country, began this final 10 days of the spring sales campaign 14 per-

cent behind schedule.

"The successful weekend," Candace Wagner, the sales organizer, told me later, "gives us the confidence to push to make the campaign. We have teams going out every night and have decided to put first priority on making our *Militant* goal."

Nationally, as the scoreboard below indicates, we have gone over the top on the *PM* goal. This is an important conquest.

The task at hand is to do what Newark supporters plan: going all-out to make the local and national *Militant* goals. We are presently 13 percent behind on the *Militant* goal and 5 percent behind on our overall cumulative target. The drive ends June 6.

Two of the strongest sales areas this spring have again raised their goals for the final push. Phoenix supporters increased

their *Militant* target by 30 — to 110.

New York salespeople voted to up their goal 50 each for the *Militant* and *PM*.

A national subscription team in Sioux City, Iowa; and Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Worthington, Minnesota, is also winning new readers. After less than three days on the road, the three-person team sold 14 subscriptions, including 12 to the *Militant*, to workers in Sioux City. Three subscriptions were sold to workers at three plant-gate sales, reports team member Roni Lerouge.

The team also sold nine *Militants* to students at a high school even though they were chased off by cops after 20 minutes.

The most impressive sale took place June 1 outside the Swift Independent meat-packing plant in Worthington. Some 61

Militants were sold to the 300 workers entering the plant. Later, the union president bought a paper from a team member at the union's offices.

At a May 16 rally in Sioux City in support of three striking United Food and Commercial Workers locals, supporters sold 11 *Militant* and one *PM* subscriptions, reports Phil Norris.

Charleston, West Virginia, supporters have been stepping up sales to coal miners in Boone and Wyoming counties — two of the top coal-producing counties in the state. On May 16, reports Dave Salner, a team traveled to Oceana, a town in the middle of this region. "We took with us a reprint of a *Militant* article on the mostly Navajo mine workers fighting back against Peabody Coal's union-busting attacks out West."

"By the end of the day," he reports, "we had sold 15 subscriptions."

Spring Subscription Scoreboard

Area	Goals		Sold		% Sold
	<i>Perspectiva</i>	<i>Militant</i>	<i>Perspectiva</i>	<i>Militant</i>	
New Paltz, N.Y.	10	0	13	1	140
Houston	75	10	86	18	122
Milwaukee	100	25	112	19	105
Des Moines, Iowa	100	10	94	20	104
San Jose, Calif.	180	100	151	133	101
Baltimore	150	8	135	19	97
Phoenix	110	100	88	113	96
Chicago	250	100	235	91	93
Pittsburgh	90	10	84	9	93
San Francisco	100	60	81	60	88
Seattle	180	50	163	36	87
New York	600	350	491	324	86
Birmingham, Ala.	130	2	111	2	86
Boston	240	60	177	77	85
Charleston, W.Va.	100	0	82	2	84
Twin Cities, Minn.	200	15	160	20	84
Newark, N.J.	375	175	310	149	83
Los Angeles	325	200	279	159	83
San Diego	85	55	72	43	82
Atlanta	110	10	88	8	80
Tucson, Ariz.	2	3	2	2	80
Portland, Ore.	125	25	90	28	79
Oakland, Calif.	150	50	130	26	78
Cleveland	125	15	93	16	78
Austin, Minn.	80	10	63	3	73
Morgantown, W.Va.	95	5	69	4	73
Kansas City	120	20	96	6	73
Totals	6,700	1,800	5,178	2,022	85
To be on schedule			6,047	1,625	90

Central America groups in Boston protest break-ins

BY DENISE McINERNEY

BOSTON — The offices of two Central American solidarity organizations, housed in the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, were the scene of break-ins between 7:30 p.m. May 15 and 2 a.m. the next morning. There have been nine break-ins at the church, which provides sanctuary for a political refugee from El Salvador and office space for several antiwar organizations, since November 1984.

In the office of the New Institute of Central America (NICA), a file box and a box of financial records had been opened.

A box of computer disks had been opened and muriatic acid had been splashed on them, ruining the disks and destroying the information they contained.

In the office of the Central American Solidarity Organization (CASA) nothing was taken or apparently tampered with.

NICA director Beverly Treumann told a news conference that the latest incident "bears the mark of a politically motivated break-in."

Alan West, director of CASA, and John Roberts of the Massachusetts Civil Liberties Union also protested the break-ins at the news conference.

What lies behind deportations, trials of Nazi war criminals?

'Militant' replies to a reader's letter

BY ERNEST HARSCH

Several weeks ago, the *Militant* ran an article on two recent decisions by the Supreme Court bolstering the use of the death penalty in the United States.

The death penalty, it showed, is an instrument of repression and terror in the hands of the capitalist rulers.

There are no bankers, landlords, or industrialists on death row. The vast majority of those sentenced to death are working people or unemployed.

Working people, the *Militant* stressed, thus have an interest in fighting to abolish the death penalty entirely.

The article also pointed to Nicaragua as an example of a country that has done away with this barbarous practice. The death penalty was abolished in Nicaragua from the first days of the Sandinista revolution in 1979. No one, including the former National Guardsmen who murdered, tortured, and raped under the old Somoza dictatorship, can be sentenced to death.

As Sandinista leader Tomás Borge explained, "A society that shows contempt for and harms a human being is only showing contempt for and harming itself."

Linneas case

In a letter, reprinted below, *Militant* reader Roy Inglee takes issue with one brief section of the death penalty article, on the U.S. government's deportation to the Soviet Union of Nazi war criminal Karl Linneas. He had previously been sentenced to death by the Soviet courts.

The *Militant* cited the Linneas case as an example of another, less obvious, form that capital punishment can take. In essence, the *Militant* argued, extraditing or deporting someone to a country where they are already under a death sentence is little different than if Washington imposed the sentence itself. If one is consistent about opposition to all use of the death penalty, then expulsion in such cases should be opposed as well.

The *Militant* also noted that the Linneas case sets a dangerous precedent that the government could use against those who have sought refuge in the United States from death sentences imposed by various right-wing dictatorships around the world. And by choosing an evident mass murderer like Linneas, the U.S. rulers have sought to reinforce public acceptance of the death penalty.

Inglee's letter doesn't address the question of how Washington has used the Lin-

neas extradition to strengthen the death penalty. Though he doesn't actually say so, by focusing on Linneas' record as a Nazi war criminal Inglee seems to imply that opposition to the death penalty shouldn't apply to figures like him.

Making exceptions about government use of the death penalty, however, seriously undermines the struggle to abolish legalized murder. Where should the line be drawn? Which crimes are serious enough to warrant a death sentence and which not?

And who in this country makes such determinations? The reality today is that it is the capitalist government and courts. Even if they may decide to execute (or deport for execution) a few mass murderers, the gas chambers and electric chairs will continue to be used overwhelmingly against working people.

We should therefore aim to eliminate the death penalty entirely, in all its forms and against all categories of people.

Government stance

Inglee says that the "real attitude of the U.S. government to Linneas" is shown by Attorney General Edwin Meese's efforts to find another country willing to take him, besides the Soviet Union.

Some figures in and around the Reagan administration have opposed deportation to the Soviet Union of Linneas or other accused Nazi war criminals. Former White House aide Patrick Buchanan has been the most vocal of them.

Their arguments center around the claim that it is impossible to get a fair trial in the Soviet Union. Seeking to reinforce the myth of capitalist "justice," Buchanan has suggested that they be tried instead in the United States, Western Europe, or Israel (I will take this up later).

But for Washington, the use of the Linneas case to make anticommunist propaganda was less important than deporting him — which it did. In fact, it was Meese's Justice Department that conducted the long deportation proceedings against Linneas and finally expelled him.

Nor is Linneas' case unique. Currently, there are 27 others with U.S. citizenship or residency that the government is trying to deport on the grounds that they lied to immigration officials about their Nazi past. And officials estimate that another 50 could be added to the list.

Inglee raises an important point about the refuge that the U.S. government gave to many of these war criminals, and the ties

that some of them have had with U.S. spy agencies.

Immediately after the end of World War II, the U.S. occupation forces operated a "rat line," which Inglee refers to. Through it, thousands of Nazi murderers and torturers were permitted to escape prosecution and to flee to South America, Canada, and the United States.

According to Allan Ryan, a former head of the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, at least 10,000 came to this country. "The United States was a haven for Nazi war criminals," Ryan said.

Others remained in Europe to act as U.S. intelligence agents. Klaus Barbie, who is now on trial in France, was one of those.

Known as the "butcher of Lyons" for his extermination of Jews and French resistance fighters, Barbie was employed by the U.S. army's Counter Intelligence Corps from 1947 to 1951 in West Germany. The CIC was aware of his record as Gestapo chief in Lyons. In 1951, U.S. officials helped Barbie flee Europe to avoid extradition to France, where he faced trial.

Barbie then went to Bolivia, where he continued to practice his trade. Bolivian officials, testifying in the Lyons trial, reported that Barbie became a lieutenant colonel in the Bolivian army and was responsible for torturing and killing many opponents of the military dictatorships in that country. During a period of civilian rule in Bolivia, Barbie was extradited to France in 1983.

Barbie, Linneas, and the other Nazi torturers have not been the only ones to get U.S. help or refuge. Some of Washington's top South Vietnamese puppets are now living in the United States, as are army and police torturers from Argentina and from the ousted Batista and Somoza dictatorships of Cuba and Nicaragua.

The U.S. collaboration with such butchers tells a lot about the character of the government in Washington.

Working people, on the other hand, have every reason to want to see such enemies of humanity brought to trial to answer for their crimes.

War-crime trials

Inglee focuses on the U.S. government's collaboration with former Nazis. He overlooks another aspect of the government's relationship to them.

At the same time that Washington has provided refuge to some of these Nazi war criminals, it and other imperialist governments have, for 40 years, organized a series of prominent war-crime trials. From the Nuremberg trials immediately after World War II through the current Barbie proceeding in Lyons, these are portrayed as efforts by "democratic" governments to achieve some justice for the victims of genocide and mass terror.

While the individuals involved deserve to be brought to trial, a narrow focus on them alone obscures the ultimate cause of World War II's enormous slaughter: the capitalist system itself, which breeds inter-imperialist competition and the drive for colonial expansion.

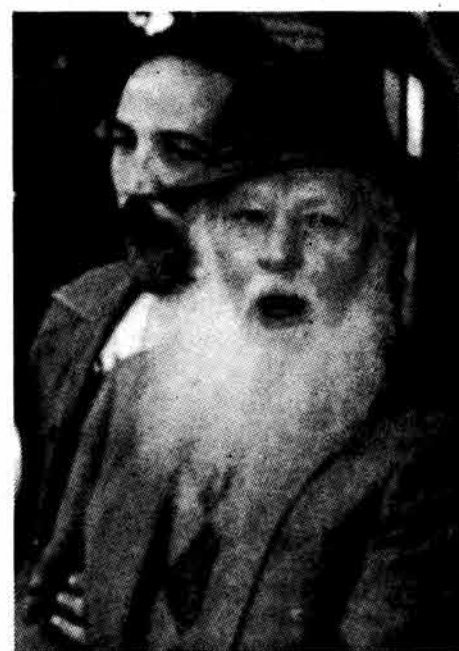
Moreover, the capitalist governments prosecuting these mass murderers are themselves guilty of similar crimes.

During World War II, Washington refused to open its doors to European Jews fleeing the Nazi advance, thus condemning them to the gas chambers. In the 1960s and 1970s, Washington murdered hundreds of thousands of civilians during the Vietnam War, and set up concentration camps for Vietnamese villagers not all that different from the Nazi camps. The main targets of the U.S.-orchestrated contra war against Nicaragua today are also civilians.

The hypocrisy of the French government's charges against Barbie is also revealed by the massive torture and extermination it carried out in Algeria in the 1950s and early 1960s, resulting in the deaths of about a million Algerians.

Israeli trial

A government that claims a special right to prosecute former Nazis is the regime in



Washington deported Nazi criminal Karl Linneas to face death sentence in Soviet Union.

Israel. A trial is currently under way in Jerusalem of John Demjanjuk, a retired Cleveland auto worker extradited to Israel to face charges of executing Jews at the Nazis' Treblinka camp.

In conducting this trial, Israel is as hypocritical as its U.S. and Western European allies. It has massacred Palestinian villagers, driven hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland, and enacted legislation that treats Palestinians remaining within Israel as second-class citizens. The Israeli military continues to massacre Palestinian refugees and Lebanese civilians in southern Lebanon.

Although the crimes Demjanjuk is accused of — and the evidence is pretty conclusive that he's guilty — did not take place in Israel and occurred before the Israeli state even existed, the Israeli regime claims a right to try him. This is designed to give the Israeli regime a humanistic veneer and reinforce the false claim that Israel represents and protects the interests of world Jewry.

For this reason, extraditions to Israel in such cases should be opposed.

Washington and the other capitalist governments are using these trials to try to cover up their own crimes against humanity. They are singling out individuals accused of committing mass murder more than 40 years ago to divert attention from the massacres and slaughters of today.

Linneas, Barbie, and other war criminals like them are scapegoats. Despite the use U.S. authorities may have had for them in the past, they are now expendable, in the service of a broader effort to whitewash the current aggressions of Washington, Paris, Tel Aviv, and their allies.

A reader's letter: Expose U.S. ties with mass murderers

I think Ernest Harsch weakened his otherwise excellent article on the death penalty [in the May 22 *Militant*] by a mistaken approach to the Linneas extradition.

The real attitude of the U.S. government to Linneas is shown by Attorney General Meese's clandestine efforts to bribe or bully various South American nations into providing refuge for this Nazi butcher. Why would the Reagan gang have taken that political risk if they had decided to deport Linneas?

After World War II, the CIA and U.S. Army Intelligence rescued several thousand Nazi war criminals and through the "Rat Line" operation smuggled them into the USA or South America. For example, Barbie, the butcher of Lyons, was taken to Bolivia and given a job in the secret police as a torturer, just like Lyons, eventually rising to colonel. Hitler's agent in Lyons became Washington's agent in La Paz. I'm convinced that Linneas is another Barbie. Why would the Reaganistas have taken such risks to save Linneas except to cover an even worse scandal, say links with the CIA?

I think our attitude toward the Linneas scandal should be to exploit the publicity

to expose the INS and the Reagan government. The *Militant* should expose the government's policy of sheltering Nazi, Batista, and contra war criminals and terrorists, while at the same time it tries to deport hundreds of thousands of Central American refugees. The incredible contrast between the government persecution of Héctor Marroquín, Margaret Randall, and Joe Doherty, people guilty of expressing ideas the government doesn't like, and the government's policy of sheltering people guilty of mass murder can really help rally support in immigration defense cases. I think the *Militant* should take advantage of the situation to strike hard to free Joe Doherty, stop the Randall deportation, and win residency for Héctor. In the Linneas case Reagan and Meese have handed us a club, let's take the club and begin beating them over the head.

Roy Inglee,
Beacon Hill, Delaware

P.S. Selling the *Militant* on the bus to the April 25 march was the easiest since about '71. I sold 20 papers and a sub, with no effort, in backward Delaware. To me it feels like the beginning of a political turn.

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Militant/Roberto Kopec

Miners in Puerto Cabezas at rally during assembly

Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast autonomy process

Notes from Multiethnic Assembly

From April 22-24, a *Militant* reporting team attended the Multiethnic Assembly held in Puerto Cabezas on Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast. An article in the May 8 *Militant* reported on the discussions and the draft autonomy law approved by the delegates who represented the Indian, Black, and mestizo peoples of the Coast region.

The following are further notes on the Atlantic Coast and the autonomy process, based on discussions with delegates to the assembly and residents of Puerto Cabezas.

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

Puerto Cabezas, with 15,000 inhabitants, is the second-largest city on the Atlantic Coast.

It was founded in the early 1920s by the Bragman's Bluff Lumber Co., a U.S. corporation that exported wood from the large pine forests here. Other U.S. corporations also made Puerto Cabezas their headquarters for operations in Nicaragua.

By the late 1960s, these firms had pulled out of the country, taking their money and leaving behind huge tracts of deforested land and thousands of unemployed workers.

Walking through the southern part of Puerto Cabezas, along one of the town's two paved streets, one hears the loud, steady beat of the diesel engines of the new electric power plant, donated by Czechoslovakia.

Since the July 1979 Nicaraguan revolution, Puerto Cabezas has gotten its first paved streets, an upgraded airport, expanded lumber operations, and a concrete prefabrication plant, the latter donated by Cuba.

Near the power plant, Puerto Cabezas' one pier juts out hundreds of yards into the ocean. This pier had decayed and was almost unusable due to neglect by the regime of Anastasio Somoza after the U.S. companies left. It was further damaged by a CIA-organized raid in 1983.

The Nicaraguan government is now carrying out a major project to rebuild the pier and open this port to large oceangoing vessels once again.

Many delegates at the Multiethnic Assembly stressed the importance of guaranteeing that their people really benefit from economic projects in the region. They adopted articles providing that the local autonomy governments would "participate effectively in the planning process and programs of national development [carried out] within the region" and "administer and promote their own economic projects in the autonomous regions."

A Sumo Indian delegate asked how they could be sure that their land titles would be respected, since they never were during the years of the Somoza dictatorship.

Ray Hooker, coordinator of the National Autonomy Commission, replied that the new Nicaraguan constitution, enacted Jan-

uary 9, already guaranteed the indigenous peoples the right to their land, and that it was also spelled out in the draft autonomy statutes in an article on communal land-ownership.

The delegates then adopted an article providing that the regional governments would "promote the rational use of the waters, forests, and communal lands for the benefit and enjoyment of their peoples and the overall preservation of the ecological system."

Day-long workshops were held to give delegates the opportunity to carefully review the draft of the autonomy law.

A lengthy discussion occurred around proposals to change the name of the Atlantic Coast region, now known as the Department of Zelaya. José Santos Zelaya was the president of Nicaragua who ended British control over the Atlantic Coast and incorporated the region into the rest of Nicaragua in 1894.

In the eyes of many *costeños*, President Zelaya is identified with the discrimination and subjugation which they suffered for many years at the hands of the Managua-based central government on the Pacific.

No one spoke in favor of keeping the name Zelaya, but there was no agreement on what the new name should be.

Several Miskitos proposed "The Mosquitia," the old name for the region under British rule.

Another delegate proposed the "Atlantic Coast" as the name acceptable to all ethnic groups and "reflecting the unity of the peoples of the coast."

Others said that they could not decide that day, since the name had not been discussed during the mass consultations carried out in the communities. They voted, therefore, to postpone the decision until it could be discussed in the different communities.

Lloyd Miguel, a Baptist pastor from Puerto Cabezas, is a Creole and has been a leader of the autonomy commission since it began its work in late 1984.

Miguel told me that he sees much less distrust in the government now than several years ago, and said it was an important sign that the largest number of delegates at the assembly were Miskitos.

"Most people in the communities believe [autonomy] is the process whereby the problems of the Atlantic Coast can be resolved," he said.

Miguel toured Florida and Alabama earlier this year, speaking on the autonomy process and against the U.S.-organized contra war.

Susanna Marley Cunningham, a Miskito woman who is coordinator of the Peace and Autonomy Commission in Puerto Cabezas' Santa Inés neighborhood, is originally from Waspam, the biggest Miskito community on the Coco River. This area was one of the first targets of the U.S.-organized war, and its population was

evacuated by the Nicaraguan government in early 1982.

Cunningham and most other Waspam Miskitos then went to live in Puerto Cabezas. Many are finding life there difficult, especially since those who used to farm cannot do so in the city, and must depend on the government for food supplies.

Many Miskitos were suspicious of or hostile to the mass organizations initiated after the revolution by the Sandinista National Liberation Front, but they wanted peace and autonomy, Cunningham said. This led them to seek an organized way to raise demands with the government — such as their desire to return to their homes along the Coco River — and to convince other Indians to stop fighting the government.

This then led to the formation of the Peace and Autonomy Commissions (CPAs) a little more than a year ago.

"The Peace and Autonomy Commissions grew up as a demand of the people," Cunningham explained. "They knew that without peace there could be no economic development or improvements in education, health care, and other social services."

The CPAs talk with relatives of Indians who have taken up arms, and with the fighters themselves when possible, trying to convince them to accept the Nicaraguan government's offer of cease-fire and dialogue, she said.

Cunningham also talked about the changing role of women on the Atlantic Coast. She was one of a small delegation of Coast women who attended the national assembly of the Nicaraguan Women's Association in Managua March 8.

"The idea that women are not meant only to have babies, but can also be in defense, can be professionals, can do the same work as men, is something new," she said. Indian women are often held back by a lack of education and self-confidence, or because their husbands won't let them participate in activities outside the home. "Men here are very sexist," she commented.

Many of the active members of the Peace and Autonomy Commissions are women, and they have recently started a new group called Women for Peace and Autonomy, to further encourage women's participation.

At this point, a Miskito woman named Yolanda, who had been listening to our conversation, interrupted to say that she was having problems with her husband now that she had started attending night school.

"He wants me locked up in the house," Yolanda explained. "He says that I'm as dumb as a mule. But I want to be someone, I want to be educated. I want to be able to help in everything."

Rodolfo Jennestock is a 53-year-old Creole who works as a maintenance man for a Puerto Cabezas church. He is the co-

ordinator of the Sandinista Defense Committee (CDS) in his neighborhood.

"My main work is seeing about supplies in the neighborhood store," Jennestock said. "When we need something, I go to the government [distribution center] and if they have it, we get it. If they don't, I find out why and tell people what the problem is."

"Cuba has helped us a lot," he added. "They send us food, including rice, sugar, and milk." Jennestock also praised the work of a group of U.S. volunteers from Burlington, Vermont, who had just finished building a children's park.

Not many people participated actively in the CDS in his neighborhood, Jennestock told me, though it was improving slowly.

One of the assembly delegates was Jimmy Emery, a founder of MISURASATA, a Miskito group that had taken up arms against the Sandinista government in 1981. In January of this year, Emery returned to Nicaragua to join the dialogue between Indian leaders and the government, and to work as part of the autonomy process.

At a press conference in Managua shortly before the assembly, Emery, who now leads a group called Pro-peace MISURASATA, explained why he decided to return. "We can sit down with the government and talk like civilized people," he said. "We have both made mistakes, but are showing we can correct them."

Emery had recently visited different communities in Northern Zelaya to encourage others to support the cease-fire and autonomy.

Although the autonomy law has not been adopted yet by Nicaragua's National Assembly, some communities throughout the coast have gone ahead and elected local autonomy councils.

Last November, Orinoco, Marshall Point, and Pueblo Nuevo, three neighboring communities in Southern Zelaya, held such elections. Víctor González, a Pentecostal minister, was elected coordinator in Orinoco, a town of 1,000 Garifunos (English-speaking descendants of slaves and Carib Indians) located on the banks of Pearl Lagoon.

At the Puerto Cabezas assembly, González told me that participation in community projects had increased with the autonomy election. "I'd say 85 percent of the town cooperates," González said. "We have finished building our pier and two small bridges. Now we're ready to start building a community center. All we're waiting for is the cement from Bluefields," the capital of Southern Zelaya.

The local council elected in Marshall Point has convinced four men to quit the contras and return to the village under the government's amnesty program. The council met with relatives of the four, then made all the arrangements with the government to process their amnesty request. The men are now back home, living and working with their families, González said.

Revolution deepens in Burkina's villages

Interview with Minister of Peasant Affairs Léonard Compaoré

BY ERNEST HARSCH

"The revolution can't advance without the peasantry," Léonard Compaoré, a member of the government of Burkina Faso, told me in early March.

"The transformations of the revolution must take into account the interests of the peasants," Compaoré said in an interview in his office in Ouagadougou, the capital of that West African country. By drawing the peasants into the revolutionary struggle, it will become possible for them "to liberate themselves and to take part in production."

From the earliest days of the Burkinabè revolution in August 1983, the government of President Thomas Sankara has stressed the importance of mobilizing the rural population, who make up the vast bulk of Burkina's nearly 9 million people. The goal has been to raise living standards in the countryside, as well as the level of agricultural production, an essential task in a country that has been plagued by periodic droughts and famines.

Although Burkina is one of the poorest countries in the world, hundreds of new rural schools, health clinics, marketplaces, and other facilities have been built over the past few years, many of them through the mobilized labor of villagers themselves.

Initially, peasants were organized primarily through the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, mass-membership bodies that exist in every village, neighborhood, and workplace and that are coordinated nationally to build support for Burkina's democratic revolution. On the local level many peasants also participate in Revolutionary Village Groups, through which they organize credit and service facilities.

In August 1986 the links between these peasant organizations and the government were strengthened with the creation of the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, which Compaoré heads. Several weeks after our discussion, this ministry played a key role in helping launch a new mass organization, the National Peasants Union of Burkina (see accompanying article).

'The principal force'

The main goal of the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, Compaoré said, is "mobilization, sensitization."

He explained, "We want the peasantry to stop being an inert force, so that it will become a conscious force that participates fully in the revolutionary process."

In the view of the governing National Council of the Revolution, Compaoré said, "The working class is the vanguard class

that can guide the revolution to the end, but along with other social layers that are its allies. Of these social layers, we have defined the peasantry as the principal force of the democratic and people's revolution, due to their numbers."

Compaoré continued, "We say that the construction of a national, independent, and self-sufficient economy will be supported by agriculture. Since agriculture occupies 90 percent of the population, the peasants, we cannot achieve the kind of economy we want to build without organizing the peasants."

Agrarian reform

I asked Compaoré about Burkina's agrarian reform program, in particular what impact the August 1984 nationalization of the land has had on agrarian relations.

Agrarian reform in Burkina, Compaoré pointed out, is different than in countries with significant capitalist agriculture. Burkina's peasants are engaged overwhelmingly in subsistence farming and no class of big landlords, capitalist or otherwise, ever emerged there.

"The land, although it was under the trusteeship of the traditional chiefs, was not privately appropriated," Compaoré said. "It was a collective resource, even though the chief of the land could wield a psychological power."

"Today," Compaoré continued, "the appropriation of the land should reside with the state, although, from the traditional point of view, the land belongs to the community. So there has not been any rural resettlement of peasants or redistribution of land. But each peasant is now assured of remaining where he is, if he has a real need to work [the land] for a living."

The nationalization of the land is thus intended to block the possibility of peasants losing their land through debt or private appropriation. At the same time, the government, rather than the traditional village chiefs, now has the power to determine how land is used.

Implementing this change has been a gradual process, Compaoré noted, and has met with some resistance. In certain villages the chiefs retain a degree of authority, to which even leaders of the local Committees for the Defense of the Revolution defer. But overall, he said, the more reactionary aspects of the chiefs' hold over the villages has ended.

Increasing production

Burkina's biggest problem, Compaoré stressed, is providing the peasants with the



Militant/Ernest Harsch

Rural road in Bazega Province. Five-year economic development plan seeks to raise peasants' living standards.

means to improve their productive use of the land.

Among the many difficulties peasants raise with officials of the Ministry of Peasant Affairs during their frequent tours of the countryside, several stand out: access to water, credit, and agricultural inputs, such as fertilizer and seed.

Compaoré noted that the previous reactionary regimes never gave much importance to developing sources of water, although this is key to farming in a country as arid as Burkina, on the edge of the Sahara Desert. "Today," he said, "we stress water reservoirs, wells, and dams to solve this problem."

Various agricultural credit institutions already exist, Compaoré said. Many of these are holdovers from the past, however, and do not adequately meet the peasants' needs. Now peasants are being encouraged to set up their own cooperative credit facilities.

Because of the high costs of imported, chemical fertilizers, peasants are being shown ways to produce and better use organic fertilizers.

For those peasants who sell their crops, there is also the problem of the low prices they receive. This requires strengthening the state marketing system and regulating the activities of the private grain dealers, Compaoré indicated. Developing new domestic and foreign markets for agricul-

tural produce will likewise help raise peasant incomes.

2-million ton campaign

Many of the problems facing Burkina's peasants were featured in the months of discussions that preceded the drawing up of the first five-year economic development plan last year.

"Within the framework of the five-year plan," Compaoré said, "we must see to it that the peasant has a much higher standard of living. So it is necessary to reinforce the existing socioeconomic structures, so that peasant production is stimulated."

For the coming 1987-88 harvest, the government and peasant organizations have set a target of producing 2 million tons of food grains.

Last year's harvest had already reached nearly 1.9 million tons, making it the second good harvest in a row. This not only enabled the country to meet its basic food needs — coming after several years of drought and famine — but also to set aside a 20,000-ton surplus.

Favorable rains played an important part in these improved harvests, but so did the transformations that the revolution has brought to the countryside.

On the goal of 2 million tons, Compaoré stated confidently, "With the purchasing arrangements we have made for cereal grains and with the new markets we have found . . . I am sure that this figure will be surpassed."

Burkina peasants union formed

In an April 11 declaration, President Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso announced the launching of a National Peasants Union of Burkina (UNPB).

"Peasants of Burkina, the August [1983] revolution is the result of the multifaceted struggle of the Burkinabè people for their independence and dignity," he said. "In this determined and ongoing struggle, the peasantry is the most numerous force and thus the main driving force of the democratic, people's revolution. That is why the revolution cannot proceed without and outside of the peasantry."

"Peasants of Burkina," Sankara continued, "you must come out of your apathy based on the isolated life of the fields in order to become a conscious political force, a powerful economic force capable of actively participating in the reorganization of the economy and territorial development, capable of achieving your own well-being and that of the entire Burkinabè people."

Several days later, Minister of Peasant Affairs Léonard Compaoré addressed a news conference on the launching of the UNPB. The local leadership bodies of the peasants' union, he said, would be elected

in each village. These will work closely with the existing Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (which are also largely peasant in composition), but will concern themselves more directly with the peasants' specific interests.

"The agrarian and property reform has been juridically decided," Compaoré said. "Now we must move on to the phase of implementation. This is where we will gear in the UNPB."

Addressing those tribal chiefs who continue to consider "the land their protected domain," Compaoré warned that "the UNPB is here to fight them."

In late April and early May, the elections to local UNPB executive bureaus began in various regions. On April 29-30, nearly 2,500 peasant activists from around the country, many of them members of the UNPB, gathered in Ouagadougou for a national symposium to discuss ways to increase agricultural production, in line with the objectives set in the five-year economic development plan.

Following the symposium, many of these peasant activists took part in the May Day celebrations held in the capital.

— E.H.



Militant/Ernest Harsch

Léonard Compaoré. His ministry aims to mobilize peasants.

Washington fails in its 28-year effort to isolate Cuba

BY FRED FELDMAN

During the past six years the Reagan administration has intensified Washington's 28-year policy of seeking to isolate Cuba. By stepping up pressure — economic, political, and diplomatic — the administration hoped to force the Cuban government to reduce its solidarity with the revolutionary struggles in Central America and southern Africa and to drop domestic policies that advanced the interests of the workers and farmers in advancing toward socialism.

Reagan's policies had bipartisan support, based in part on the failure of the Cuba policy of President James Carter's administration.

Setback for Carter

In 1977 the Cuban and U.S. governments had agreed to set up diplomatic "interests sections" in each other's countries, the first formal diplomatic ties since the U.S. government broke relations in 1961. Carter also lifted a ban on travel to the island.

But Washington continued to block agreements on immigration from Cuba, and sought to use the issue for anti-Cuba propaganda. In 1980 the Cuban government opened the port of Mariel to all who wished to leave. Cuba's policy of permitting free emigration and the resulting influx into the United States proved a disastrous political defeat for Carter, and a major embarrassment to his liberal supporters.

Reagan came to office pledging to increase hostility to Cuba. In February 1981 Secretary of State Alexander Haig, charging that the Castro government was aiding the guerrillas in El Salvador, threatened "to deal with the immediate source of the problem — and that is Cuba."

Then White House aide Edwin Meese broadly hinted that a new blockade might be in the offing.

Anti-Cuba campaign

The threats were only the start of the administration's anti-Cuba moves.

- A ban was reimposed on most travel to Cuba.

- Visas were regularly denied to Cuban doctors, sports figures, filmmakers, and many others who were invited to attend meetings in the United States.

- The embargo on trade with Cuba was expanded and more tightly enforced.

- Even the minimal diplomatic ties set up under Carter were partially rolled back. Since 1981 the head of the Cuban interests section in Washington has been barred from all U.S. government functions to which other diplomats were invited.

- A December 1984 agreement on immigration was torpedoed when Washington launched an anti-Cuba propaganda broadcasting station that cynically and provocatively appropriated the name of José Martí, the hero of Cuba's struggle for national independence. The Cubans responded by suspending implementation of the agreement.

- For the first time in years, Washington sent an air force reconnaissance plane over Cuban territory last December, causing sonic booms across the island.

- And Washington recalled the head of the U.S. interests section in Havana when the Cuban foreign ministry announced that he would no longer be invited to official functions — the same treatment that had been accorded to Cuba's representative in Washington for the last six years.

Bipartisan backing

Bipartisan support for turning up the heat on Cuba was indicated by congressional adoption of the Symms amendment in 1982. It authorized the administration to use "whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms" to block Cuba's alleged "aggressive or subversive activities in any part of this hemisphere."

The House of Representatives voted April 29 this year to extend the trade embargo against Cuba. Sponsored by Democratic Rep. Claude Pepper of Florida, the proposal bars from U.S. ports ships from any country that make a stop in Cuba.

But after six years of such moves Cuba is less isolated than ever — and Washington has been unable to exact a single concession from the Cubans in foreign or domestic policy. Moreover, the U.S. rulers find themselves with less leverage than ever before for putting pressure on Cuba.

Far from intimidating the Cubans, Washington's threats of military action inspired the accelerated development of Territorial Troop Militias, which have organized the civilian population on a mas-



Militant/Mary-Alice Waters

Billboard facing U.S. interest section in Havana says "Messrs. Imperialists we have absolutely no fear of you!"

sive scale to defend their country against a possible U.S. attack. The military threats against Cuba were not backed up by action because the U.S. rulers have concluded that the costs — political and military — would be unacceptably high.

The failure of the Reagan administration's policy has spurred the opening of a new debate among the capitalist politicians and newspaper commentators over reestablishing diplomatic and trade relations with Cuba. *New York Times* columnist Flora Lewis made this the theme of a number of columns written from Havana in March. And Sen. Claiborne Pell, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stated in February, "I'd like to see a normalization in our relations with Cuba."

"At what point do you admit that a policy has been a failure?" asked Michael Kinsley in a column published in the April 30 *Washington Post* and May 19 *New Republic*.

"It took 16 years after the Russian Revolution for the United States to recognize the Soviet Union," he wrote. "It was 23 years after Mao's revolution that President Nixon broke the ice with China, and 29 years afterward that we established diplomatic relations. . . . We even maintain diplomatic relations with Nicaragua, a country we are for all practical purposes at war with."

"Meanwhile, 28 years after the Cuban Revolution, we still refuse to recognize the Castro regime, and still attempt an economic embargo."

"Diplomatic relations are not a sign of friendship or approval," Kinsley argued. "They are a recognition of reality." Washington's tactics, he complains, have failed to block the Cuban regime from becoming "a geostrategic force to be reckoned with and a hero to the Third World."

In Latin America, Cuba has established more extensive ties than at any time since the early 1960s when nearly all governments in the region broke diplomatic and trade relations.

Cuba's political campaign to abolish the foreign debt of Latin American countries and its support to Argentina in the 1982 war with Britain over the Malvinas Islands contributed greatly to this shift. Another factor was the fall of military dictatorships in several Latin American countries such as Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. The governments that replaced them yielded to widespread sentiment for diplomatic and economic ties with Cuba.

Ties with Brazil

Last year the Brazilian government established ties with Cuba for the first time since the 1964 military coup in that country. In March, Brazil's foreign minister visited Havana to lay the cornerstone for a new embassy. He voiced appreciation for the Cuban government's declaration of support to Brazil's suspension of interest payments on its foreign debt. Cultural exchanges between the two countries have mushroomed, air and phone links are being established, and expanded trade and possible joint economic ventures are being discussed.

The government of Colombia, which broke diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1981 with Washington's encouragement, has opened new discussions on trade with Cuba.

In recent months top officials of Bolivia,

Peru, Panama, Argentina, and Uruguay have visited Cuba.

And even in the Dominican Republic, where the government has long toed Washington's line of treating Cuba as a pariah, the government of Joaquín Balaguer is discussing the opening of trade relations. The Dominican Chamber of Deputies voted April 8 to call on Balaguer to accept the "proposal made by the Cuban government to exchange cement for cocoa and coffee." Balaguer states that the policy shift is in response to Washington's 40 percent slash in the quota of Dominican sugar allowed to be imported into the United States.

Use us!

In his April 5 speech to the Union of Young Communists, Cuban head of state Fidel Castro commented on the Dominican government's use of relations with Cuba as a means of pressuring Washington for fairer trade terms:

"Lately there has been a steady stream of visitors from the Dominican Republic to our country. People-to-people relations are improving with the acceptance of the current government in the country. . . . We told them, 'Use us, use us to make them nervous!' We have become a means to make the imperialists nervous, and whenever others want to take revenge for some of their abuses, they make gestures toward us, friendly gestures toward our country, and that drives the Yankees mad."

The role of Cuban troops in helping Angola fend off attacks from the apartheid regime in South Africa and the sending of health-care workers, teachers, engineers, military advisers, and other volunteers to help the people of other countries has continued to increase Cuba's standing among the peoples of Africa, Nicaragua, and elsewhere.

One of the sharpest blows to Washington's diplomatic drive against Cuba came March 13, when the United Nations Human Rights Commission defied a heavy-handed campaign by Washington and voted down a proposal to list Cuba as a violator of human rights.

Frame-up defeated

The representatives of Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela joined those of 14 other countries in rejecting the proposal, after the frame-up charges had been thoroughly exposed by Cuban spokespeople. The delegate of Brazil abstained, and Costa Rica's representative was the only Latin American to vote for Washington's position.

Even the efforts to cut Cuba off from contact with the people of the United States have not fared too well.

A team of more than 450 Cuban athletes is scheduled to come to Indianapolis this summer to participate in the Pan American games. The next games are to be held in 1991 in Havana.

The failure of the Reagan administration to make any headway in isolating Cuba is presenting the U.S. rulers with a thorny problem, at a time when the Cubans are continuing their course of solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles abroad and their measures to deepen the revolution at home. The setbacks to Washington create a favorable atmosphere for stepping up demands for the normalization of diplomatic, trade, and other ties with Cuba.

Do you know someone who reads Spanish? Democratic rights gains

The U.S. government is facing new resistance to its attacks on the rights of foreign-born U.S. workers.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was forced to partially retreat from its initial attempts to deport seven Palestinians and a Kenyan because of their political views.

And, after a 10-year battle, the INS was forced to grant Mexican-born socialist Héctor Marroquín a social security card and a temporary work permit. The fight is now on by Marroquín, and his thousands of supporters, to win U.S. citizenship.

The June issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* covers these fights.

In addition, it contains analysis of the new U.S. immigration "reform" law. It also features a first-hand report from the recent congress of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba.

Perspectiva Mundial is the Spanish-language socialist magazine that every month brings you the truth about the struggles of working people and the oppressed in the U.S. and around the world.

Perspectiva Mundial

Washington es culpable de la muerte de Ben Linder

Asesinato suscita protestas y más voluntarios a Nicaragua

ESTADOS UNIDOS

- Inmigrante socialista gana permiso de trabajo
- Falla intento de deportar a palestinos
- Acerca del nuevo plan de 'amnistía'

Informe directo sobre congreso juvenil cubano

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'We need to extend sanctions'

South African ANC leader Oliver Tambo in Australia

BY KATE BLAKENEY

SYDNEY, Australia — In the first official visit by an African National Congress leader to Australia, ANC President Oliver Tambo spoke to public meetings in several cities in March and April.

He and his delegation were in Australia as guests of the Federal Labor government. The delegation held talks with Prime Minister Bob Hawke, Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, and other senior officials.

"We are fighting arms in hand against apartheid in South Africa but we need to increase the international pressure," Tambo told a capacity audience at Sydney Town Hall.

"We need to extend the sanctions. We need other countries to follow the example of the Australian government in sport, cultural, and economic sanctions; but Australia needs to go further. The apartheid regime is beginning to crack but more pressure needs to be applied."

In Perth, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, large audiences turned out to hear Tambo. Everywhere his quietly spoken but powerful words were greeted by standing ovations.

A handful of right-wing protesters, bolstered by media coverage echoing pro-apartheid propaganda smears against the ANC, demonstrated outside the meetings.

Claiming the ANC was "terrorist," opposition members of Parliament moved to censure the government for sponsoring Tambo's visit.

At every encounter with the media, this same theme was picked up by reporters: Is the ANC terrorist? Isn't the ANC communist? How can the ANC claim to be truly supported by the masses? What will happen if the apartheid regime is brought down — will whites still be able to live in South Africa?

Patiently, Tambo answered again and again that it is the South African government that killed more than 2,000 Black Africans in the last two years and incarcerated thousands more simply because they were fighting for the most elementary democratic rights.

It is the South African authorities who detain children as young as eight years, torture prisoners, and cause the malnutrition and suffering of millions. They are the real terrorists, he said.

To the question of mass support, Tambo pointed to polls showing Nelson Mandela and himself as by far the most popular figures in the country. The regime outlawed the ANC, fearing that if its real views were known it would get even greater support, including from more whites.

"The Freedom Charter is very specific — the South Africa of the future will be for all its peoples, whites included," said Tambo, referring to the platform of the South African freedom struggle.

More than 2,500 people showed up to hear Tambo at the Sydney meeting.

Earlier this year, the freedom of the city had been granted to Nelson Mandela by the Sydney City Council. This was in response to a secretive, unilateral visit by the then lord mayor of the city to attend the Johannesburg centenary celebrations in South Africa. The mayor declared on his return that apartheid was now phased out.

The council condemned his visit and apology for apartheid and voted overwhelmingly to bestow the freedom of the city on Mandela and to invite Oliver Tambo to Sydney on his behalf. The symbolic key to the city was handed over to Eddie Funde, the ANC's Australia representative.

Tambo's address to the meeting here outlined the struggle for democracy in South Africa and stressed the centrality of opening up access to the land for would-be Black farmers. He described apartheid as a regional problem, referring to the constant state of war that South African military intrusions imposed on neighboring African countries.

SYDNEY, Australia — Small counter-demonstrations were staged outside each of the meetings in Australia to hear African National Congress leader Oliver Tambo.

Facts have come out showing that these

protests were funded by U.S. businessmen and backed by the South African regime.

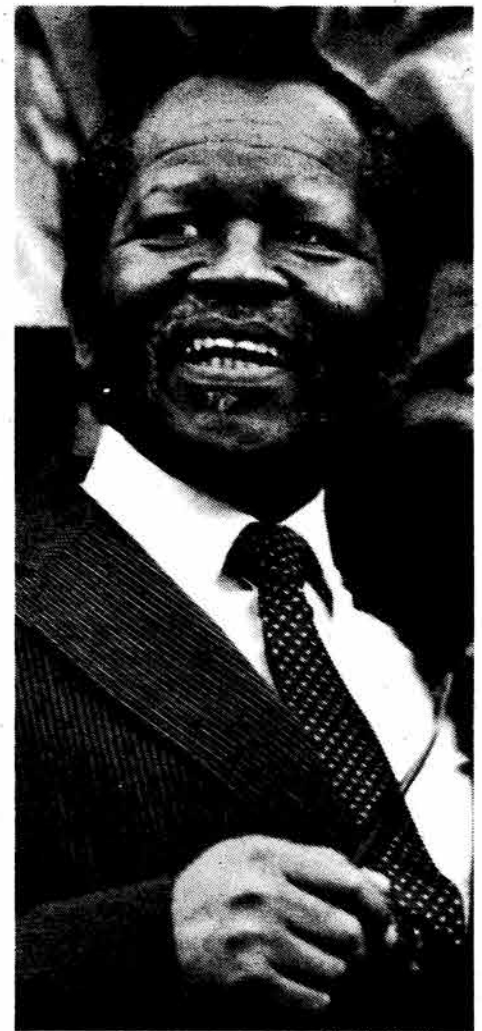
U.S. citizen Jeffrey Pandin, who describes himself as a "professional activist," was sent to Australia by the International Freedom Foundation (IFF), a group funded by U.S. capitalists.

Pandin held talks in Australia with the Young Liberals (YL) and members of the right-wing National Civic Council. "My job has been to see that the YL and other people opposing Oliver Tambo's visit knew the effective way to run a demonstration," he told the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

Pandin said that more than a hundred U.S. businesses had donated more than \$1 million to the IFF since it began operating less than six months ago. The group, he said, funds "projects" around the world, including the Nicaraguan contras.

An IFF representative appeared on television to deny charges of links with South Africa.

However, the IFF had supplied material to the Australian Broadcasting Corp.'s *Four Corners* program, which included a heap of paper with a top sheet that read: "The accompanying material is disseminated by Pearson and Pipkin, Inc., which is registered with the Dept. of Justice, Washington, DC... as an agent of the Republic of South Africa."



G.M. Cookson

ANC President Oliver Tambo

— WORLD NEWS BRIEFS —

More protests in Fiji against rightist coup

Most economic activity in the western part of Fiji's main island, Viti Levu, ceased May 26-27 in protest against the overthrow two weeks earlier of that South Pacific country's elected government.

Opponents of the coup, which include Fiji's main trade unions, the Fiji Labour Party, and sectors of the Indian community (which makes up some 49 percent of Fiji's population of 715,000) have vowed to continue the protest shut-downs every Tuesday and Wednesday. They also aim to extend the actions to Suva, Fiji's capital.

Such labor action can hit Fiji's sugar-cane industry particularly hard. Sugar is Fiji's second largest export earner (after tourism), and the harvesting of the cane is already late. Most sugar-cane workers are of Indian origin. Tensions have been further heightened by efforts of native Fijian landlords to evict Indian tenant farmers.

Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka, the leader of the May 14 coup and now minister of home affairs in the new interim government, said new elections would not be held for at least 16 months. It would take at least a year, he said, to rewrite Fiji's constitution to further restrict the political rights of Indians.

In late May, both the U.S. and New Zealand governments announced that they were suspending aid to Fiji as a result of the coup.

Imperialist pressures mount against Vanuatu

Since the beginning of May, the governments of Australia, New Zealand, and the United States have stepped up their pressures against the South Pacific country of Vanuatu. In particular, they have challenged Vanuatu's right to conduct its own, independent foreign policy.

Officials of these governments have whipped up a hysteria campaign over Vanuatu's relations with Libya. Diplomatic ties between the two countries were first established in May 1986, and discussions have been under way over Libyan economic aid for Vanuatu, which was devastated by a cyclone in February.

The Australian government has expelled Libyan diplomats from that coun-

try, accusing them of attempting to "destabilize" the South Pacific. New Zealand officials have made similar unsubstantiated charges, as did Vernon Walters, the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, during a tour of the region.

Commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific fleet Adm. James Lyons said that Washington would send an armada of warships to carry out exercises in the Pacific, the likes of which "hadn't been seen in more than a decade."

In late May, Vanuatu Prime Minister Walter Lini announced that his government was postponing a decision on whether to allow Libya to set up a diplomatic mission in Vanuatu.

S. African commandos raid Mozambique

Entering Mozambique from neighboring South Africa, several groups of military commandos staged simultaneous attacks on four buildings in Mozambique's capital of Maputo May 29. Three civilians were killed in the assault.

Among them were a Mozambican businessman, Antonio Pateguana, and his wife. Pateguana is related to Mozambique's military chief of staff. A night watchman was also slain at a house occupied by South African refugees.

The raiders likewise attacked an office of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, but no casualties were reported there.

The Mozambican government accused the apartheid regime of launching the raids. The ANC, in a statement, called it a "barbaric act."

Dominica party hits military exercises

Hundreds of troops from the United States, Britain, and seven Caribbean countries participated in joint military exercises in the Eastern Caribbean island of Dominica in early May.

The seven Caribbean countries are members of the Regional Security System, set up under Washington's tutelage following the U.S. invasion of Grenada in October 1983.

Michael Douglas, leader of the opposition Dominica Labour Party, condemned the exercises as a "vulgar intimidation of the Dominican people."

"We say to all foreign troops: leave our beautiful island," Douglas declared.

Cotton merchants, textile giants get rich off 1985 farm bill

BY RICH STUART

GREENSBORO, N.C. — The newspapers here recently reported that more than \$728 million was paid last year to textile companies and cotton merchants by the U.S. government. These payments were made under a provision of the Food Security Act enacted by Congress and signed by President Reagan in 1985.

This bill and others like it are commonly called "farm bills." The Democratic and Republican politicians who draft and vote for these bills portray them as a help to farmers. But the opposite is the case as this example shows.

The 1985 bill instead of helping cotton farmers actually ended up putting millions of tax dollars paid by working people into the pockets of textile giants like Burlington Industries, the largest textile company in the United States. Burlington, based here in Greensboro, got a check for \$14.8 million. And another textile giant, Cone Mills, which is also in this city, got a payment of \$16.5 million.

Other textile companies that were paid out of this swindle were West Point-Pepperell in Valley, Alabama, (\$12.4 million); Greenwood Mills in Greenwood, South Carolina, (\$11.3 million); and hundreds of other textile companies.

Even the Texas prison system got \$458,860.

But the biggest hustlers were the big cotton merchants like Dunavant Enterprises of Memphis, Tennessee. Dunavant topped the list, getting over \$100 million. Another Memphis merchant, Allenberg Cotton Co. got over \$83 million and Calcot Limited, a California cotton business, got \$54.5 million.

Cotton merchants are the people who buy cotton from the farmers and sell it to textile companies like Burlington and Cone to be made into fabrics, carpets, sheets, towels, and other articles.

The cotton mill where I work buys its cotton from Dunavant. I was told that the checks to the companies and merchants aimed to keep them from losing money on cotton they had bought at a higher price than the price set in the 1985 bill. This was not a Food Security Act but a Profit Security Act.

We are told that the payments in the farm bills go to "producers." But the cotton merchants and the owners of Burlington and Cone don't produce anything. The producers in the cotton industry are the cotton farmers and textile workers. They don't get this government aid. Instead, the taxes we pay help cover the big checks for Dunavant and Burlington.

In places like Opelika, Alabama; Ita Bena, Mississippi; and England, Arkansas, small cotton farmers know that this bill did not provide the security they need to keep their farms.

The merchants squeeze the cotton farmers by keeping down the price paid to farmers for cotton, and then jack up the price when it is sold to textile companies.

And the poorly paid textile workers at the mills know that they will never see a penny of the government's multimillion dollar payoff to the owners.

Cotton exports and textile profits have soared since the 1985 bill was adopted, but working cotton farmers and textile workers are no better off.

And they are not the only victims of the bill. Cotton-growing countries in the Third World, such as Egypt, Mexico, and Pakistan, are being hurt by the U.S. government's price-fixing. Their debts will grow and their development will be pushed further back.

Rich Stuart is a member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 319T at Highland Yarn Mills in High Point, North Carolina.

—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

And either way, he's got six witnesses — Last week the prez was saying the whole contra funding scam was his idea. This week he said, "I don't know who they



Harry Ring

were, and I never asked, and I never asked how they did it."

'Eat At Your Own Risk' — That's the label for meat and poul-

try products suggested by Vernie Gee, a dissident federal inspector. He told a Senate committee, "The flies have been getting meaner, the roaches fatter, and the rats bolder. There are still holes in the roofs at some plants. . . . Workers at the plants seldom have sanitary facilities sufficient to keep their hands clean."

P.S. — In case you think that inspector's a crank, the National Academy of Science reports there are some 4 million cases of food poisoning annually from chickens which are "inspected" on belt lines at a rate of one to three seconds each, depending on the speed of the line.

And 77 millionaires' servants — There are now 23 admitted millionaires in the U.S. Senate.

Ask the experts — James and Rosalyn Carter have published their self-help book on coping when you're retired. By the time they finished the joint project they were speaking to each other only through their word processors. "It really was a strain on our marriage," he said.

In New York, they call it chutzpah — Ever alert for an extra buck, Minneapolis boat dealer Irwin Jacobs opened a New York-style deli overlooking the lakefront marina where his cruisers are displayed. But what hit us

is that the hot dogs are \$4.25.

A matter of mood — Now available, three teapots styled by prominent Italian architects. One whistles like a train, another twitters like a bird. But we opt for the one that just boils water, quietly. \$100.

Yippie, yuppie . . . as long as you love a buck — Apparently a bit uptight about the slated TV film on the Chicago 8 trial, ex-Yippie Jerry Rubin, now a "business networker" says, "I guess I represent that part of the '60s that went into business."

Now really, Dick Tracy — Discussing an ad writer's book about children's TV, a perspicacious

New York Times advertising columnist advises, "One of his important bits of instruction . . . is that the basic function of commercial television programming is not to instruct, entertain, or inform. Rather it is to attract viewers to sell to advertisers."

A gem — We're not quite sure how they work, or if they passed a consumer safety test, but a New York boutique is offering cut-crystal bras. \$1,400.

How about a tie-in with Pamper's? — New on the market, Whiffy Wear, a cologne for the kiddies. Six spray bottle aromas — banana, apple, orange, strawberry, coconut, and bubble gum.

—CALENDAR—

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Witness to Apartheid. A film. Discussion to follow. Sat., June 6, 7:30 p.m. 1306 1st Ave. N. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Bay Area

The Myth of the Happy Japanese Workers. How Big Corporations Use It Against Us. Speaker: Ken Honda, Socialist Workers Party, former factory worker in Japan.

San Jose. Sat., June 6, 7:30 p.m. 46½ Race St. For more information call (408) 998-4007.

San Francisco. Sun., June 7, 2 p.m. 3284 23rd St. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

Oakland. Sun., June 7, 7 p.m. 3808 E. 14th St. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

Forums translated to Spanish. Donations: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum.

Oakland

The New Simpson-Rodino Immigration Law: An Attack on All Working People. Speakers to be announced. Translation to Spanish. Preforum dinner and special showing of video on undocumented workers. Sat., June 13, 6:30 p.m. 3808 E. 14th St.

Donations: dinner, \$3; forum, \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 261-3014.

San Diego

Democratic Rights vs. Government Spying: A Rally to Defend the Bill of Rights. Speakers: Michel Shehadeh, Committee for Justice, Palestinian activist facing deportation under the McCarran-Walter Act for his political ideas; Greg Nelson, regional labor spokesperson for the Political Rights Defense Fund, member International Association of Machinists Local 2225; Kristen Crabtree, UCSD student accused of assaulting an FBI recruiter; representative of the Interfaith Task Force on Central America.

Fri., June 12, 7:30 p.m. Plumbers Local 230 Hall, 3909 Centre St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: PRDF. For more information call (619) 234-4630.

San Francisco

Cuba: a Living Revolution. A report-back from a recent Venceremos Brigade dedicated to Winnie and Nelson Mandela given by three members of the brigade. Translation to Spanish.

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Sat., June 13, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

U.S. War in Nicaragua. A Front Line videotape. A documentary history of the U.S. war against the Nicaraguan people beginning with the revolution in 1979. Sat., June 6, 7:30 p.m.

132 Cone St. NW. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

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MINNESOTA

Austin

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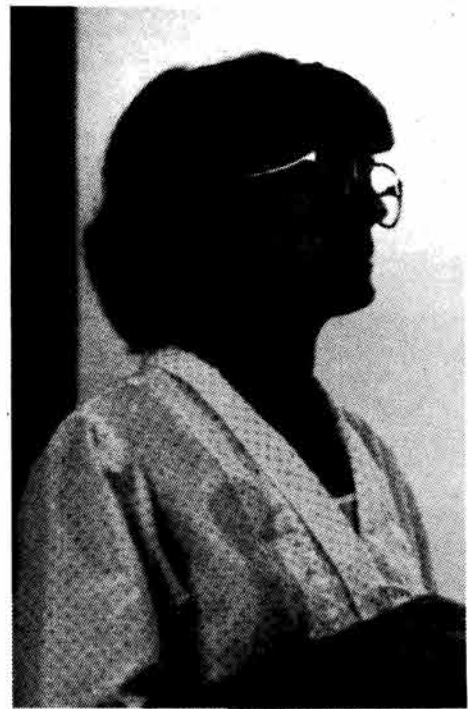
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Canadian revolutionary youth launch group

BY SARA LOBMAN

MONTREAL, Canada — A new organization of revolutionary Canadian youth was established here the weekend of May 16-18. Called Young Socialists, it includes youth from English-speaking Canada and from oppressed French-speaking Quebec.

The new organization, which is in political solidarity with the Revolutionary



Socialist Voice/Monica Jones
Carole Caron, a leader of Young Socialists.

Workers League, begins with 33 members. Almost half of these joined in the past two months. More than half the members are women, and more than a third are members of unions.

Over 100 people from across Canada participated in the three-day gathering.

Many of the participants were new to socialist ideas. Most had participated in the big April 5 demonstration in Ottawa during President Ronald Reagan's visit to the

Socialist summer schools being organized across U.S.

BY NORTON SANDLER

The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance will be hosting summer schools around the country from early June through the first week of August. Organized around selected topics, the classes will provide workers and students an opportunity to deepen their understanding of Marxism.

Supporters and friends of the SWP and YSA, readers of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and those interested in learning more about Marxism are invited to attend. Young workers and students from nearby areas are encouraged to spend as much time as possible this summer in the cities where the classes will be held.

The class series will vary some from one city to another.

One series being considered will be built around the foundations of communist politics and will feature fundamental works by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels such as the *Communist Manifesto*, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, and *The Wages System*.

Another possible series is on the history of the Socialist Workers Party. Others being organized include ones on the U.S. labor movement and on the working farmer and farm workers — a Marxist approach to the rural toilers.

A number of areas already have classes under way on the writings of Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin. These classes can be incorporated into the overall summer educational program.

The entire summer program will culminate with the Socialist Educational and Active Workers Conference sponsored by the SWP and YSA to be held in Oberlin, Ohio, August 8-13.

Brochures on the summer school being organized in your area can be obtained by writing or phoning the SWP or YSA. (See Directory on page 12.)

Canadian capital. The protesters had demanded an end to the U.S.-sponsored contra war against Nicaragua, and Canadian-U.S. complicity with apartheid.

The convention agreed to build and participate in work brigades to Nicaragua.

Several convention participants came from Vancouver, British Columbia, located on Canada's Pacific Coast. They explained the fight going on there against propositions 19 and 20, which would severely restrict the rights of labor, including the right to strike.

The convention heard three principal reports based on a previously circulated resolution, "Youth and the Socialist Revolution."

Gary Kettner gave a report called "The Crisis of Imperialism and the Worldwide

Fight for Socialism."

He discussed the international crisis imperialism is facing and the moves it is taking in response. In Canada, as in the United States, the capitalists are trying to resolve the crisis at the expense of workers, pushing to drive down their living standards and curb their rights.

In addition to the antilabor ballot propositions in British Columbia, there is a reactionary campaign in Canada to restore the death penalty, moves to restrict immigration, and attempts to undermine the right to abortion.

These attacks have not gone unopposed, Kettner explained, pointing to the broad support for last year's meat-packers' strike against Gainers in the province of Alberta. He also cited a recent garment strike in

Montreal.

A report on the launching of the new group was given by Carole Caron. A major target will be to raise \$19,000 to finance the agreed-on activity.

There were workshops on Nicaragua, South Africa, Palestine, and El Salvador, as well as one on Malcolm X's contributions to the struggle of working people in the United States and other countries.

Underlining the internationalist character of the new organization, a rally heard a leader of the JS-19, Nicaragua's Sandinista youth organization; a representative of a committee in defense of the revolution in Burkina Faso; a Palestinian; a Salvadoran; and a Chilean. A leader of the Young Socialist Alliance in the United States also spoke.

Young Socialists meet in Chicago

Continued from Page 3

August 1986 court victory in the SWP and YSA's suit against decades of FBI spying and harassment of the two organizations; and the case of Mexican-born socialist Héctor Marroquín who is fighting to become a permanent resident of the United States.

- Expand the circulation of the *Militant* and the Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*. YSA members have played a big role in the spring subscription drive. Winfield noted that the "Militant is the YSA's paper. It helps to clarify what's politically going on week-by-week."

- Distribute and use Pathfinder books. Pathfinder books, Winfield explained, are the best educational tools YSA members have. He urged everyone to read the new Pathfinder book *Fidel Castro's Political Strategy: From Moncada to Victory*, by Marta Harnecker. (The Pathfinder literature table at the convention sold 250 copies of the book and a total of \$2,000 worth of books and pamphlets.)

- Participate in the SWP summer schools.

Winfield urged YSA members in outlying towns to come into cities where SWP branches exist. The SWP will aid in providing housing during the course of the schools.

- Build and attend the Socialist Educational and Activists Conference to be held in Oberlin, Ohio, August 8-13.

Ed from Detroit stressed the role of the *Militant* in building the YSA. "We must all read the *Militant*," he said, not only to win new members but to keep and develop members.

He also suggested the *Militant* establish a "Notes from the YSA" column to report on how the YSA is moving forward.

Several delegates had participated in a student brigade to Nicaragua. Robert from Portland, Oregon, reported on a slideshow he gave after returning from that trip. He showed it to 300 high school students and at three different college campuses, building for the April 25 antiwar march.

Workshops and classes were also presented during the convention, including on education; YSA finances; the struggle of working farmers; and on the fight of U.S. farm workers, presented by Tomas Villanueva, president of the United Farm Workers of Washington State, who also spoke to the entire convention.

Terry Marryshow, general secretary of the Maurice Bishop Youth Organisation, gave a class and greetings to the convention, as did Mojaki Thulo of the African National Congress Youth Section and Tji Kuili of the South West Africa People's Organisation.

Overall, 194 YSA members attended the convention. They came from 55 cities. Twenty-three delegates were Black, Latino or other oppressed national minorities; 15 were students.

Guests included 42 students, as well as a number of SWP members.

Four youths attending the convention decided to join the YSA.

Election of new leadership

Reflecting the new levy of youth in the organization, the YSA National Commit-

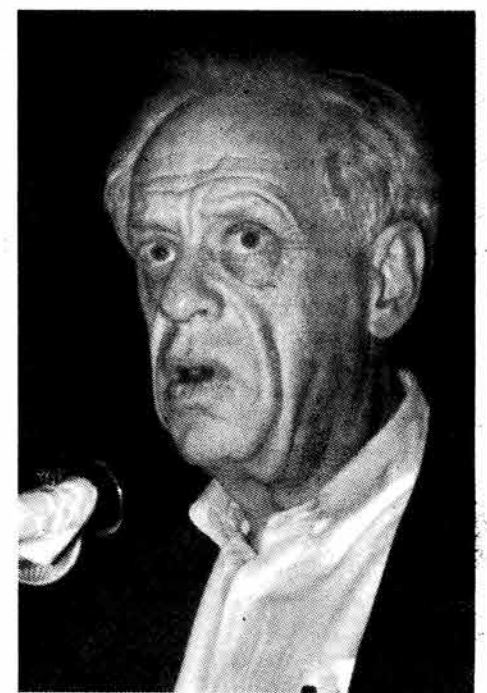
tee elected by the delegates is quite new, and younger. Only 31 percent of the outgoing committee was reelected.

Of the 35 members on the YSA's highest leadership body between national conventions, 51 percent are women and 35 percent are Black, Chicano, other Latinos, and Asian. The average age is 23, with the youngest national committee member being 15 and the oldest 30.

There are 20 industrial workers on the leadership body, and four high school students. Two members just recently left college.

Rena Cacoullos was reelected national secretary.

The Union of Young Communists of Cuba sent greetings to the convention, "wishing you success in your work." The convention also received written greetings from the JS-19 of Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan embassy in the United States, the Young Socialists of Sweden, Young Socialists of New Zealand, Revolutionary Marxist Party of Sri Lanka, Proindependence University Students Federation of Puerto Rico, and the leadership body of a Texas prisoners' organization.



Militant/Holbrook Mahn
David Linder, father of U.S. engineer killed by contras, spoke at political rights rally held in Chicago during YSA convention.

— 10 AND 25 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE 30¢
June 10, 1977

"A severe setback to the Black and women's movements."

That's what Socialist Workers Party leader Willie Mae Reid called the May 31 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court upholding discriminatory seniority systems.

"For all practical purposes this reactionary decision legalizes race and sex discrimination in employment," said Reid, who was the SWP's 1976 vice-presidential candidate.

In its seven-to-two decision, the court ruled that even where past discrimination has been proved, seniority systems that perpetuate its inhuman effects are not necessarily illegal.

"The ruling," Reid said, "will be used to justify the discriminatory layoffs that have already taken a heavy toll on these gains since the onset of the 1974-75 recession. Rigged seniority systems will continue to keep Blacks and women from moving up to higher-paying, more skilled jobs."

The court majority based its decision on its interpretation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In passing that law, the justices said, Congress did not intend to disrupt the "routine application" of seniority systems, "even where the employer's pre-act discrimination resulted in whites having greater seniority rights than Negroes."

THE MILITANT
Published in the interests of the Working People
June 11, 1962 Price 10¢

JUNE 6 — Roscoe Funderburk, a 36-year-old Negro of Monroe, North

Carolina, was shot through the back of the head and killed early June 3. He was the father of five children. His killer is Charles Outlaw, a 20-year-old white man, also of Monroe.

Negro residents of Monroe state that Outlaw is known to have expressed extreme anti-Negro sentiments in the past. Monroe is a Ku Klux Klan stronghold.

At the preliminary hearing, where he was bound over to the superior court and released on \$2,000 bond, Outlaw declared that he had shot Funderburk for being a "Peeping Tom."

Earlier in the week another white man of Monroe, Toby Price, 30, had justified his shooting of James Poston, a Negro, with a similar "Peeping Tom" charge. Badly wounded in the hips, Poston is in the county jail with his bail set at \$5,000. Price was not jailed.

This is the city where in 1958 two Negro boys, aged eight and nine, were thrown in the county jail "for their own protection" and then sent to reform school because one of them had been kissed by a seven-year-old white girl.

It is the city where Robert F. Williams, the militant leader of the Union County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, fought in vain to get justice in the courts for Negroes assaulted and beaten by whites. These efforts plus his attempts to desegregate lunch counters, recreation facilities, and schools, brought a steady flow of KKK threats to Williams and his family. Three attempts were made on his life.

Last August thousands of racists were encouraged by Monroe's police to riot against local Negroes and Freedom Riders engaged in anti-segregation picketing. From the ensuing disorders was concocted a framed-up kidnap charge against Williams and four others. Williams fled with his family to safety in Cuba.

U.S. Navy out of Persian Gulf!

As more U.S. warships head for the Persian Gulf war zone, hundreds more U.S. sailors are being deliberately placed in harm's way. Their lives, like those of the 37 sailors who died when Iraqi missiles struck the USS *Stark* in the gulf May 17, are regarded as expendable in Washington's deadly serious drive toward launching a military attack on Iran.

Military officials told the *Washington Post* that the nine warships now in the gulf or headed there "will turn out to be only the thin edge of the wedge."

"They said several squadrons of Air Force F15 fighters based in the Persian Gulf, together with more AWACS (airborne warning and control system) planes will be needed to cover shipping if the tanker war escalates. If land bases cannot be found, they added, at least two aircraft carriers will be needed at the southern end of the gulf to provide protection and retaliatory power."

Millions of U.S. working people, who have no stake in war with Iran or any other country in the Middle East, are opposed to Washington's provocative buildup in the region. But the billionaire families that rule this country, and the Republican and Democratic politicians who represent them in the White House and Congress, are agreed at this time that the stakes in the Persian Gulf are worth the risk of war.

The 1979 Iranian revolution dealt a massive blow to the U.S. rulers' domination over this oil-rich region. And they are determined to head off the possibility of upheavals in Iraq or other gulf nations.

Many media commentators portray Congress as obstructing or slowing down the drive toward military action against Iran. On the contrary, Congress is playing a crucial role in helping the White House get war preparations back on track in the wake of the *Stark* incident. The discussion taking place in Congress today is over how to most effectively carry out this war policy and win public support for it.

An example of this bipartisan effort was the recent trip to Kuwait by Democratic Sen. John Glenn of Ohio and Republican Sen. John Warner of Virginia. Both used the occasion to lend support to the naval buildup, to press for permanent U.S. bases in the gulf area, and to call for what they characterized a "long-term" U.S. military involvement there.

As part of setting the stage for an incident that can be turned into a pretext for attacking Iran, a campaign of war propaganda is being waged against that country.

President Reagan described Iran as "this barbaric country" in a talk with foreign journalists in the White House.

Supposedly objective reports in the media describe Iran as "increasingly belligerent," and its people as "fanatical" and "unpredictable."

The appeal to chauvinist prejudice is intended to convince people that Iran is certain to do the things Washington is trying to provoke it into doing.

The war propaganda is also intended to dehumanize the Iranian people in the eyes of people here, and to minimize opposition to the brutal "retaliation" that Washington is preparing.

The preparation of an incident that would provide a pretext for striking at Iran has been in the works for months. U.S. forces in the gulf were built up quietly. Preparations were made with little publicity to place Kuwaiti tankers under U.S. flags and command.

But the still unexplained Iraqi attack on the USS *Stark* disrupted this process, and made it harder to spring the trap that was being prepared. The government was forced to reveal a little bit more about its plans.

As a result, working people in the United States and around the world are challenged to recognize the stakes involved and voice their opposition to Washington's policy. Antiwar fighters, unionists, and other fighters have an important responsibility to discuss, learn about, and organize against Washington's war moves.

The stakes are high. If Washington is successful in carrying out acts of war against Iran, the U.S. rulers will be emboldened to step up attacks on working people everywhere — from Central America to southern Africa. Many more U.S. working people will fall victim to this war drive, as did the marines in Lebanon, the sailors of the *Stark*, and Ben Linder in Nicaragua.

Foes of U.S. military aggression have the duty and obligation to get out the truth about Washington's provocations in the Persian Gulf and to demand an end to them.

U.S. warships out of the Persian Gulf!
Hands off Iran!

Israel's 'retaliatory' raids

Israeli forces shelled and strafed 18 villages in southern Lebanon May 31.

And, in a new move, Israel's occupation forces moved 10 miles beyond the "security" strip they have held for several years.

The air attack on the villages came on the heels of a series of Israeli bombings of Palestinian refugee camps in the area.

The Lebanese villagers were targeted by jet fighters and helicopters in an application of Israel's barbaric policy of "retaliation" against civilians for asserted guerrilla attacks.

This "retaliatory" attack came after Lebanese liberation fighters, reportedly members of the Islamic Resistance Movement, came into conflict with the South Lebanon Army, a Christian force armed and financed by Israel.

The fighting erupted in an area of several villages near Jezzín, a town of 75,000. Israeli forces were promptly dispatched from the "security" strip to Jezzín, purportedly to prevent it from being overrun by some 200 guerrillas.

At least three people were killed and 20 wounded in the attack on the villages.

The "security" strip is an area some 50 miles long and 6 miles wide along the border with Israel. In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon in a move to crush the Palestine Liberation Organization forces based among the huge Palestinian refugee population there.

After exacting a heavy toll on Lebanese and Palestinians alike, Israel withdrew most of its troops. But it held on to the "security" strip.

Now, perhaps, with the move into Jezzín, it has decided it needs a new "security" area to protect the initial one.

Jezzín is a few miles from two Palestinian refugee camps that have been the targets of repeated, savage Israeli air strikes.

So far this year, there have been 15 Israeli air raids on the Mieh Mieh and Ain Helweh camps. The latter alone has a population of 80,000 Palestinians.

In May, there were three attacks on these camps in which at least 34 people were killed and more than 100 wounded.

Describing the May 1 attack, the Associated Press reported that six Israeli jets "fired 18 rockets into the main square of Mieh Mieh, where most of the casualties occurred."

And in a report on the May 8 attack, the paper said, "Rockets shattered some homes and a number of women, children and elderly civilians were among the dead and wounded . . . stunned residents doggedly searched in the debris for missing relatives and belongings."

The naked brutality of the attacks underlines the reactionary nature of Israel's role in Lebanon. Everywhere, the demand should be made that Israel get its troops out of Lebanon and end its bloody aggression against the Lebanese and Palestinian people.

Reprieve for farmers

An important victory was scored June 3 when a North Dakota federal judge ordered the Farmer's Home Administration (FmHA) to halt foreclosure proceedings against 78,000 small farmers.

Immediately affected are 13,000 farmers in what the FmHA classifies as the "accelerated" stage of foreclosure and another 65,000 in an earlier stage of the foreclosure process.

U.S. District Judge Bruce Van Sickle ruled last month that the FmHA had failed to notify farmers of their right to due protection under the law. His June 3 order requires the government to advise farmers who had foreclosure action initiated against them in late 1985 of their rights and to revise FmHA forms. His order, however, does not affect 1,000 farmers who have already lost their farms under proceedings initiated in 1985.

Often referred to as the lender of last resort, the FmHA over the years provided loans to farmers just starting out

or those who have had trouble securing commercial credit. But like other commercial and government loan agencies, the FmHA has increasingly been putting the squeeze on working farmers. The decision in this case, for example, affects 29 percent of farmers with FmHA loans.

In the first three months of this year, the FmHA sent notices to nearly 12,000 farmers saying they would soon be put in "accelerated" foreclosure status. The government has also initiated a plan that would allow it to confiscate federal crop subsidies and income tax refunds of farmers who are behind on FmHA loans. In addition, the government issued new eligibility rules making it much more difficult for current borrowers to obtain future loans.

The victory in this case can be an impetus to the struggles by working farmers to bring a halt to government and big-business theft of their land.

What's wrong with cutting farm production

BY DOUG JENNESS

Last week I explained that the cards are stacked against farmers around the world when they try to sell their produce. They run up against a market dominated by a handful of price-fixing and profit-hungry merchants and food processors.

Working farmers know this well and for decades have attempted to find ways of overcoming this formidable barrier. They established cooperatives in order to pool their collective strength to deal with the buyers, rather

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

than confronting them individually. But seldom have they achieved enough leverage to get more for their produce. The co-ops have either been taken over or become subservient to the big traders.

Many farmers, for example, sell their grain to co-op-owned elevators that are really part of the vast pipelines of Cargill, Continental, or one of the other international giants in the grain trade.

Some farmers have joined forces to withhold their commodities from the market in order to try to force the buyers into a collective bargaining-type agreement. These actions, however, have rarely, if ever, led to any pacts to raise prices. It would take the weight of a fighting labor movement behind the farmers to accomplish that.

Now, another proposal is being put forward — this one by two Democratic legislators, Iowa Sen. Thomas Harkin and Missouri Rep. Richard Gephardt.

The measure they have introduced into Congress would sharply reduce planting of wheat and feed grains. Participation would be compulsory if, in a poll, the majority of farmers producing each commodity favored the plan.

The idea behind the bill is that if supply is limited, grain companies will be forced to give farmers a higher price, one sufficient for them to meet production costs and have enough for a decent living.

The second part of the proposal calls on the secretary of agriculture to negotiate an agreement with governments of other grain-exporting countries to set a floor on world prices.

This accord would, in effect, be an international cartel, which some reporters have compared to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' (OPEC's) attempts to keep oil prices high.

These proposals present problems for working farmers. A big difficulty with curtailing production is that it protects some farmers with little regard for other working people. Cutting the supply of food when millions around the world need more food is a narrowly conceived view of how to advance farmers' interests.

As working farmers fight against the worsening conditions they face, they are beginning to learn that their enemies — big bankers, industrial trusts, merchants, landlords, etc. — are the enemies of all farmers and workers, not only in this country but around the world.

The Gephardt-Harkin proposal is an obstacle to developing a broader awareness of the common interests of all the exploited and oppressed and the need for solidarity in combating their common enemies.

Rather than advancing solidarity, the "supply-management" nostrum focuses on protecting the interests of specific categories — wheat producers, soybean growers, corn farmers, etc.

An international agreement to keep grain prices high has the same problem. It would be particularly burdensome to debt-ridden Third World countries that need to import large amounts of grain, but don't have a lot of resources to pay for it.

Experience has proven that there is also an impractical side to the international grain cartel approach.

Some 85 percent of world grain trade is controlled by six giant monopolies. The idea that governments of grain-exporting countries can or want to set up price agreements that can't be violated or undermined by these powerful traders is fuzzy thinking at best.

Two attempts to fix a floor on prices, one in 1933 and the other in 1967, quickly fell apart.

Perhaps even more telling is that where government-run marketing boards have been set up, as in Australia and Canada, the big international grain traders end up buying and selling a lot of the grain and influencing the policies of the boards.

No capitalist government has the storage space, transportation lines, or communications systems to engage in the international grain trade. Even the food relief the U.S. government sometimes provides to other countries isn't shipped by the government. It is sold to big grain merchants cheap, who then resell it for a profit.

What working farm families need is to get rid of the entire capitalist marketing system. That requires a perspective of linking their struggles and demands to those of wage workers and other exploited farmers at home and abroad. Next week I'll discuss what this would mean.

LETTERS

'Persian' Gulf?

Having been a reader for two years now, I would like to tell you how much I enjoy your informative paper. The pride and integrity of the contributors shines forth in each article.

However, I have a question about what appears to be an error or oversight. In your coverage of the Middle East, the large body of water separating Saudi Arabia and Iran is invariably referred to as the Persian Gulf. I have read that people in the Middle East refer to it as the Arabian Gulf.

Doesn't calling it the Persian Gulf remind everyone in the region that the U.S. government backed up the former shah of Iran in his oppression, repression, and torture of the Iranian people? Doesn't it reflect more solidarity with the people of the Middle East to call it the Gulf of Arabia than to call it the Persian Gulf, the term used by the big-business press and the Pentagon?

Also, here is a donation to the Prisoner's Fund.

A.C.

Pahoa, Hawaii

Gulf war

Americans are being killed by weapons sold to Iraq. Thirty-seven are dead and no Iraqi assets are frozen or taken in the United States. No weapons embargo is imposed.

If the dead were Wall Street stockbrokers the president would act harshly. But common Americans are expendable.

The Iraqis can pay off a few politicians at the top to fight a war with Iran. That's President Reagan's objective. Get the people's mind off the Iran-contra affair.

The military wants another trillion dollars for the Persian Gulf.

William Krenkel

Salt Lake City, Utah

Let Nicaragua live

I was planning on sending you a contribution. But after seeing an ad in the May 1 *Militant* I decided instead to send it to the Let Nicaragua Live fund. These poor people deserve it more than any of us.

I am a white, 50-year-old worker. For the first time in my life I am ashamed to call myself an American.

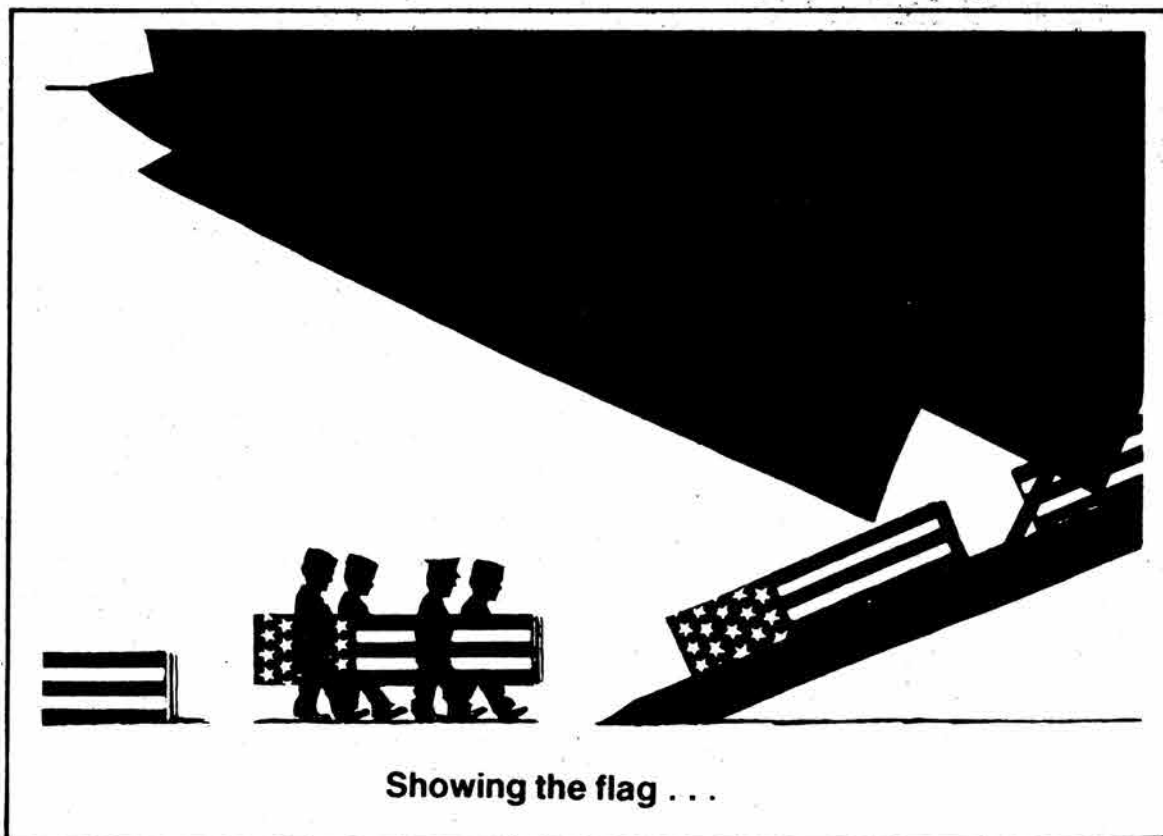
This particular president and his whole band of anti-civil liberties thugs have succeeded in making millions of U.S. citizens ashamed of being party to supporting the insidious murder and pillage carried out in our names in Nicaragua. My fervent hope is that the Irangate hearings will very soon lead to Reagan and his murderous war policy being retired from public office.

D.O.

Hawthorne, California

Prisoner fund

I wanted to thank you for the subscription to the *Militant*. I received my first copy yesterday. The "no holds barred" reporting is, in my opinion, unsurpassed by



Jim Morin

any publication in print today.

The articles on prison reform are very welcome to many inmates, including myself. They let us know that someone out there cares about us even after many of our family members have abandoned us.

By keeping us informed of struggles going on outside the prison walls, your paper makes us feel like we belong to the human race. It gives us something to believe in. That, in turn, sparks hope, which in prison is a very

rare commodity indeed.

So to all you readers who have made contributions to the *Militant's* Prisoner Fund in the past and those who plan to do so, I say a very heartfelt thanks.

A prisoner

Goodyear, Arizona

Malcolm X

I was talking with a few brothers who have the same idealistic concepts as I do about the problems of society. We were talking about Malcolm X and the subject of the *Militant* came up. I have read that Malcolm X talked highly of your paper.

As a young man only 22 years old, I do not have experience in politics and history. Therefore, I tend to be running behind sometimes on the latest struggles of my people.

Would it be possible to send me some information on how I can get your paper. I do not receive much money but I would gladly do what I can to help pay for it.

A prisoner

Midway, Texas

'Militant' calendar

By the time *Militant* subscribers receive the paper in the mail, many of the events advertised in the calendar have already occurred. I would like to suggest that you consider setting the dates of these events earlier and publishing them a couple of weeks ahead of time.

D.B.

Los Angeles, California

Baby M

This letter is in response to Cindy Jaquith's two-part article "Issues in the Baby M court case." [April 24 and May 1 *Militant*] I'll agree with Jaquith's position that many issues have been raised as a result of Judge Harvey Sorkow's rulings in the case. But it is to an assertion that Jaquith makes that I wish to address my comments.

She claims, "It is the woman who carries the pregnancy, gives birth to the baby, and begins nurturing the baby who has the right and responsibility to raise the child."

She further asserts that absent evidence of child abuse, that being a woman is the only criterion we as a society should use in determining issues of child custody.

This position — that it is the woman's "right" over a man's right to raise our children — implies, among other things, that biological differences make the woman a better parent. Jaquith's arguments along these lines are flawed, sexist, and wholly antithetical to the doctrines of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky.

Any political statement (which Jaquith's article is) that implies one group of people have certain "rights" over others should be examined in the light of recent history.

The position that certain people have "rights" over others is the foundation upon which the South African government has been built, the Third Reich was built by the Nazis, and upon which President Reagan is attempting to build a new society.

For Jaquith to argue on the one hand that a woman's "biological, social, and emotional relationship" are factors to consider but that a man's "biological connection is irrelevant" is as sexist a statement as I've seen in the *Militant* in years.

It is clear that Cindy Jaquith's article was written from a purely emotional point of view and ignored the long-term consequences of her statements.

Yes, the Baby M case, like all issues that involve our children, are emotional issues, and the issues are indeed ones that working people need to address. But taking the position that a woman has the "right" over a man to raise our children is not the answer to anything.

A prisoner

Elkhorn, Wisconsin

Linder protest

In response to the murder of Ben Linder by the contras in Nicaragua, the Mid-Hudson Nicaraguan Support Project (NSP) held a news conference here in New Paltz. The NSP announced the establishment of the Benjamin Linder Scholarship Fund to raise money to send the group's members to Nicaragua.

Sam Chetta

New Paltz, New York

Misinformation

I had heard a lot about your weekly paper. Upon reading it, I was glad to know that someone is telling the truth about what is happening in countries like South Africa, and in the Middle East and Central America. I have been hearing so much misinformation about these countries that I didn't know what to believe. For example, I never knew before that a country like Nicaragua existed.

A prisoner

Rosharon, Texas

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Exaggerated coverage of April 25 protests?

Your report of the April 25th demonstration in your May 8th issue are unacceptable.

First off, your crowd estimates are bigger than any I have seen in the left press. I was in San Francisco. There were 50,000 people, not 75,000. Fifty thousand was the virtually unanimous figure among people present. This is important because it is typical of your style regarding demonstrations you support. You always give an uncritical description of both the buildup and the event itself.

In fact there were profound problems with both the Washington and San Francisco demonstrations, problems that must be realistically faced if we are to have a stable antiwar movement.

As you know, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland ordered all central labor councils to withhold official support for the demonstration. The San Francisco Central Labor Council complied. Walter Johnson, its secretary-treasurer and the most prominent of the antiwar bureaucrats, marched in the parade but did not speak as expected. Nor did John Henning, president of the California AFL-CIO.

My estimate is that no more than 1,000 marched in all of the labor contingents. Others say 1,500. That means they were no more than 3 percent of my 50,000 estimate, even less using your 75,000.

It goes without saying that the problems of reaching the ranks of labor and the antiwar movement is not a light one, not one that can be trivialized. But it is an error to think that the route to those ranks lies through the bureaucracy.

Your report on the Washington demonstration by Norton Sandler said that about 20 percent of the march was labor.

Given your rose-colored reporting, I'm necessarily skeptical and I think you can understand why. But certainly the bureaucrats did nothing and will do nothing here in the West.

Lenni Brenner

Albany, California

Norton Sandler replies:

Accurately reporting on the size of large demonstrations is difficult. Consequently, it is not uncommon for estimates to vary, even in the working-class press.

Crowd counts of the Washington, D.C., demonstration ranged from 150,000 to as low as 35,000 (a figure the *New York Times* and other papers attributed to the National Park Police).

The *IUE News*, paper of the International Union of Electronic Workers, reported that "nearly 150,000" were at the action. The same figure was carried in *Frontline's* coverage of the action. Hospital Employees Union Local 1199 reported in their paper that 3,000 of their members were part of the "nearly 100,000" at the rally. The *Guardian* and *In These Times* said over 100,000 attended.

The 125,000 crowd size in the article I wrote on the D.C. action was this reporter's best estimate of how many people were there. It was corroborated by other members of the *Militant* reporting team who participated in that march and rally.

Similar consultation by our reporters on the scene went into estimating the size of the San Francisco demonstration. Here again reports on the action varied. The Associated Press said 30,000 attended the demonstration. *Frontline* said "over 30,000" were there. The *Dispatcher*, paper of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, said 50,000 participated. John

Trinkl's article in the *Guardian* said, "some 70,000" were there, a figure not so different than the 75,000 we reported.

In his letter, Brenner is fixated on the AFL-CIO hierarchy's hostility toward the April 25 demonstrations. But in spite of their attacks, both the San Francisco and Washington, D.C., actions had considerable working-class participation, far greater than that of previous antiwar actions including those against the war in Vietnam.

Many of the workers did not come in organized union contingents. For example, thousands of Latino workers participated in both actions. Many marched in contingents organized by antideportation groups, solidarity organizations, or came on their own.

A popular slogan chanted by Latino marchers in Washington was "*Estamos aquí, no nos vamos*," (We are here, and we're here to stay) reflecting the growing confidence Latino workers have as part of the U.S. working class.

Within this broader working-class participation, the organized trade union turnout was significant, particularly considering Kirkland's campaign to urge unionists not to participate. Admittedly those marching in union contingents were a proportionately smaller number in San Francisco than in Washington and were relegated to the rear of the march instead of heading it up as in D.C.

The April 25 coverage in the big business press invariably made a caricature of the actions describing them as throwbacks to the predominantly student marches of the 1960s. But the working-class turnout on April 25 was proof enough that these were marches of the late 1980s and show that a new antiwar movement will be very different than that of the 1960s.

Strike solid at a western mine

After one year union pickets still say, 'No contract, no work'

BY SUSAN LaMONT

TRINIDAD, Colo. — This beautiful old town of 9,000 is located at the base of the front range of the Rocky Mountains, in an area rich in coal miners' history and tradition. It is only a few miles from the site of Bloody Ludlow, where some 20 men, women, and children were murdered in 1914 by the coal operators who controlled the area as if it was their private kingdom.

I visited Trinidad and nearby Raton, New Mexico, in May as part of a *Militant-Perspectiva Mundial* subscription team.

You can't get a cup of coffee or buy a postcard in Trinidad without getting into a discussion with the friendly people who live here, and nearly everyone has a connection to the coal mines and to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Every canyon in the area had a mine at one time, but most of the mines are now closed. Unemployment is around 17 percent.

We learned about a strike at the underground Wyoming Fuel mine near Weston. After a 40-minute drive deeper into the mountains we rounded a bend and saw a bunch of pickups and a group of workers playing cards across the road from the mine entrance.

Members of UMWA Local 9856, including strike captain Joe Duran, told us the story of their strike. In 1982 Colorado Fuel and Iron (CF&I) closed the mine and 700 miners lost their jobs. The company used the two years the mine was shut to sink a new shaft.

Then in 1984, Wyoming Fuel bought the mine and some of the local's members

were recalled. The company claimed they needed concessions to keep the mine open. Anxious to keep working, the miners were forced to agree to givebacks that included a \$1-an-hour cut in wages and a one-year extension of their old contract.

But the company wasn't satisfied and the miners were all laid off again in 1985. When the local's contract expired the next year, the company refused to negotiate a new one. Instead, Wyoming Fuel began contacting the union members about returning to work on an individual basis.

'No contract, no work'

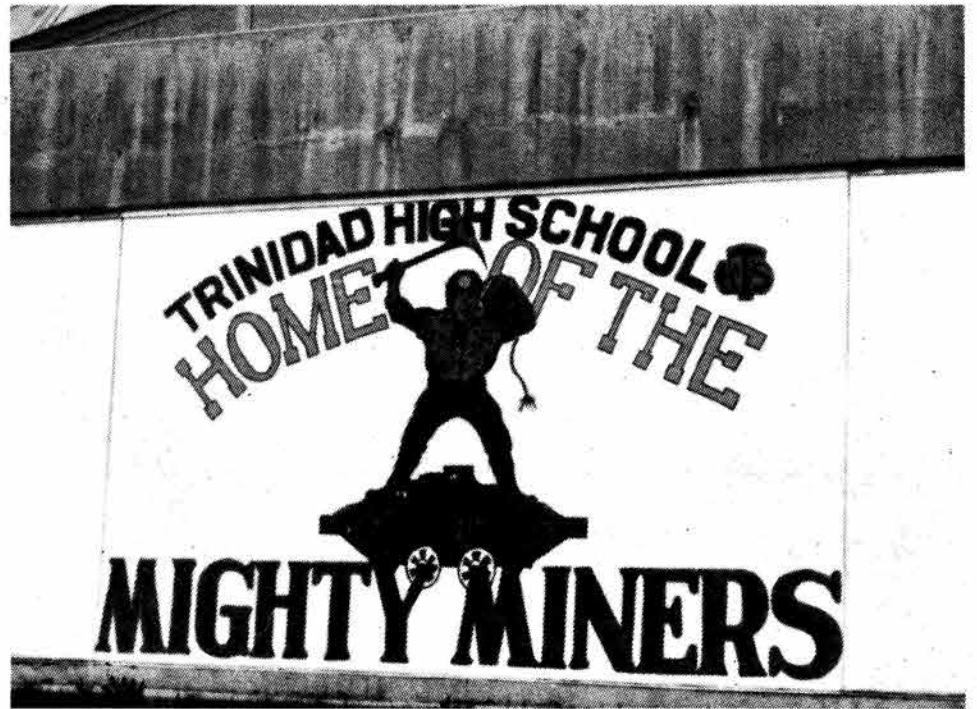
Duran said the union's response was, "No contract, no work." Local 9856 went on strike in April 1986. Not one of the 139 union members has crossed the picket line since.

The local charged the company with unfair labor practices and appealed to the National Labor Relations Board. But the NLRB ruled against the local and no negotiations with the company have been held in over a year.

Management, some scabs, and Wells Fargo security guards are now operating the mine. But the workers, who monitor trains and trucks leaving the area, say not much coal is being mined.

Everywhere you go in Trinidad you see signs of support for the strike. Bars, clothing stores, and other small businesses have "We support UMWA" signs in their windows.

The local press, however, has given the company a hand by printing their reports about setting production records. They've



Militant/Nancy Burton

Nearly everyone in Trinidad area has a connection to mines and coal union

also printed stories falsely accusing the miners of violence. "The local paper is prejudiced," one picketer said. "They don't print the UMWA side."

With some amusement, the picketers described how they are kept under constant surveillance by the company. An ultrasonic "super-ear" microphone is trained on the strikers to monitor their conversations.

The strikers explain that all they want is

for the company to negotiate with them as a union. Higher pay is not the issue. "We don't want to work for piecework," the miners explained.

Safety is also a big question. They know going back to the mine without a union would mean working in life-threatening situations without union protection. The UMWA members explained that when they were working there used to be frequent cave-ins. "If we went back in on piecework that means competition among the miners, and as soon as you start that, someone's going to get killed," a worker emphasized.

Being on strike for over a year has been rough for these unionists, even though they receive strike benefits from the UMWA. Ron Gettler said, "I've got five kids, and I lost my home. I drive a car that can't go over 40 miles an hour. My father and grandfather retired from the mine, and my grandfather died of black lung. I've got 14 broken bones from a cave-in. So if this mine goes nonunion, I don't have anywhere to go."

Messages of support and donations can be sent to President Mike Romero, UMWA Local 9856, 1804 Linden Ave., Trinidad, Colo. 81082.

Colo. grocery workers fight givebacks

BY DELBERT MAXWELL

DENVER — Negotiations resumed May 28 between the King Soopers grocery chain and United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 7. More than 5,000 workers in Colorado have been on strike since May 8, when they rejected company demands for major concessions in wages and benefits, vacations, job classification, and seniority.

As the strike enters its fourth week, it is clear that the union has the upper hand.

Despite unheard-of deals and triple-coupon discounts, King Soopers is losing 25-35 percent of its business, if not more. Mario Medina, a striking meatcutter at the Commerce City store, estimates that Memorial Day business there was 40 percent less than what it had been a year ago.

In addition, dairy products and other perishables are spoiling before they can be sold.

In a crude probe to weaken the strike, King Soopers sent out letters to strikers before Memorial Day weekend urging them to come back to work by May 22. If they did, the supermarket indicated they might get scheduled for Memorial Day with premium pay.

This offer produced no strikebreakers, but it "helped us," said Joe Janak, also at

the Commerce City store, "by just agitating us a little more."

The union membership has been able to keep itself informed by attending the weekly strike meetings and rallies at the Denver Coliseum. Other unions have expressed solidarity and made donations to the strike fund.

"When we first struck," said Marty, a checker at a store in Aurora, "we thought we were going out on a limb, but we've been astounded at the support we've gotten." It can be hard to talk to someone at a UFCW picket line because of the number of people who honk in support as they drive by.

Strikers have been joined on the picket lines by workers from many different unions.

Before the strike began, King Soopers appealed to the union to join in an alliance against "the competition." What they got, says union spokesperson Mark Belkin, was a worker-consumer alliance against the company.

King Soopers' treatment of its scabs is a good indication of what life under their proposed contract would be. Many have been fired, laid off, or had their wages reduced. Several have walked out and joined the picket lines after long delays in getting their paychecks.

King Soopers and its parent company, Kroger, have turned to their friends in the government for help.

Early on the Denver city government gave the company a terrific break. When the strike began some scabs did not have

the necessary health cards and food-handlers' permits. When the union pointed this out, the Denver director of environmental health services said he had given the company a 30-day grace period. He acknowledged: "You might say this is a technical violation of the ordinance."

King Soopers is currently seeking an injunction against the union for alleged harassment and vandalism. Of 117 incidents claimed by the company, police could confirm only two.

Iowa rally backs unionists under attack at Midwest packinghouses

BY PHIL NORRIS

SIoux CITY, Iowa — Some 900 unionists from several Midwest states rallied here May 16 in support of meat-packers on strike against three plants in the area.

United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 222 has been on strike at Iowa Beef Processor's nearby Dakota City, Nebraska, plant since March. UFCW Local 1142 from John Morrell & Co.'s Sioux City plant has also been on strike since March.

And in early May, Local 1142 members established roving picket lines at Morrell's Sioux Falls, South Dakota, plant, 90 miles north of here. UFCW Local 304A there has been honoring those picket lines in solidarity with the Sioux City strike.

Members of three striking UFCW locals were joined at the rally by meat-packers from several different plants and by other unionists.

The participants heard a brief speech from Jesse Jackson, who is seeking the

Democratic presidential nomination.

Then a motorcade of several hundred cars drove past Morrell's plant and through downtown Sioux City. Many pedestrians greeted the cars.

The motorcade got on the freeway to drive to the Iowa Beef Processors plant on the other side of the Missouri River in Nebraska. IBP cops videotaped and photographed the motorcade as it drove by the plant.

Demonstrators parked and walked a short distance to a rally site. Visible behind the plant were about 80 cinder-block houses where the company is housing scabs.

The rally was chaired by Joseph Hansen, director of UFCW Region 13. Among the speakers were the presidents of the three striking locals, the former mayor of Sioux City, and Joseph Biden, another contender for the Democratic nomination for president. Jesse Jackson spoke again.

Some \$40,000 was donated to the strikers from from various union locals in the area.

On May 31 UFCW officials announced that a tentative pact had been reached with King Soopers. But the union membership rejected the proposed contract when it was put to a vote the following day.